VISIT…

TELEVISION IN TRANSITION
Shawn Shimpach
WILEY-BLACKWELL

TELEVISION IN TRANSITION

TELEVISION IN TRANSITION

The Life and Afterlife of the Narrative Action Hero

Shawn Shimpach

WILEY-BLACKWELL
A John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Publication

This edition first published 2010
© 2010 Shawn Shimpach

Blackwell Publishing was acquired by John Wiley & Sons in February 2007. Blackwell's publishing program has been merged with Wiley's global Scientific, Technical, and Medical business to form Wiley-Blackwell.

Registered Office
John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, United Kingdom

Editorial Offices
350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA
9600 Garsington Road, Oxford, OX4 2DQ, UK
The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

For details of our global editorial offices, for customer services, and for information about how to apply for permission to reuse the copyright material in this book please see our website at www.wiley.com/wiley-blackwell.

The right of Shawn Shimpach to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted in accordance with the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, except as permitted by the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats. Some content that appears in print may not be available in electronic books.

Designations used by companies to distinguish their products are often claimed as trademarks. All brand names and product names used in this book are trade names, service marks, trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners. The publisher is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book. This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is sold on the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering professional services. If professional advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Shimpach, Shawn.
Television in transition : the life and afterlife of the narrative action hero/Shawn Shimpach.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-4051-8536-3 (hardcover : alk. paper) – ISBN 978-1-4051-8535-6 (pbk. : alk. paper)
1. Heroes on television. 2. Action and adventure television programs—United States—History and criticism. 3. Action and adventure television programs—Great Britain—History and criticism.
I. Title.
PN1992.8.A317S55 2010
791.45′652–dc22
2010002110

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Set in 10/12.5pt Galliard by SPi Publisher Services, Pondicherry, India
Printed in Singapore

1 2010

Lily, now *we can play with the toys*

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments viii

Introduction: The Time and Space of Television in Transition 1

1 Television in Transition 14
2 The Hero 30
3 How to Watch Television 48
4 *Highlander*: The Immortal Cosmopolitan 66
5 *Smallville*: "No Flights, No Tights": Doing Business with Superman 94
6 *24*: In Real Time 125
7 *Doctor Who*: Regeneration through Time and (Relative Dimensions in) Space 152

Conclusion: Do We Need Another Hero? 179

Notes 190
References 209
Index 227

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book emerges from an excitement and fascination about the contemporary television industry and textual practices developed and nurtured over the years I have been fortunate enough to teach various television studies, media studies, and history of electronic media courses. I am gratefully indebted to the many wonderful students who have listened to, challenged, motivated, and informed me at NYU, WUSTL, and UMass. For early support of these teaching opportunities and indeed for their very possibility, I especially thank Richard Allen, William Simon, Chris Straayer, David Irving, Paul Thompson, James Gardner, William Paul and Jeff Smith. Invaluable assistance with teaching these courses was also provided to me by Anne Harris, Cathy Holter, Vinicius Navarro, Talitha Espiritu, Juan Monroy, and Jonathon Graas.

A particular thank you to Toby Miller for continuing to provide all manner of guidance, support, sage advice, and sharp wit, well beyond the call of duty. For support, comments, insights, and all kinds of crucial inspiration, I thank Gianpaolo Baiocchi, Paula Chakravartty, Christopher Kamrath, Anna McCarthy, John McMurria, and Cheryl and Duane Shimpach. This book could not have been completed in so timely a fashion without the motivation and feedback provided by the Junior Faculty Writing Group: thanks so much Martha Fuentes-Bautista, Claudio Moreira, Demetria Shabazz, and Emily West. Thanks also to Robin Anderson, David Avishay, Chris Boulton, Alison Brzenchek, Sean Dubois, Michael S. Duffy, Matthew Fee, Matthew Ferrari, Roger Hallas, Fadia Hasan, Danny Kim, Zachary McDowell, Gamze Onut, Pia Pandelakis, Lin Shi, Louisa Stein, Ann Stewart and Rachel Thibault. For research assistance, I thank Rachel Miller, Jung-Yup Lee, and Haijing Tu, as well as Leda Cooks and Jarice Hanson for making it possible.

For memorable conversations, unparalleled intellectual enthusiasm, and generously offering both the right reasons and just the right attitude for moving forward, I gratefully acknowledge and thank Anca Romantan: irreplaceable and unforgettable, she is achingly missed.

Invaluable (not to mention remarkably efficient and rapid) copyediting and formatting was performed on this manuscript by Jennifer Acker. Her work here was made possible with the support of the Mellon Mutual Mentoring Micro-Grant Program at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. I thank the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Office of Faculty Development, especially Mary Deane Sorcinelli, Jung Yun, and Lily Ladewig.

An earlier version of much of Chapter Four appeared in *Cultural Studies* vol. 19, No. 3 May 2005, pp. 338–371 as "The Immortal Cosmopolitan: The International Co-production and Global Circulation of *Highlander: The Series*." Kind thanks are due to that publication and publisher Taylor & Francis for allowing the revised, updated use here.

Thank you also to Carmel McPherson for her interest, support, organization, specialized knowledge and for providing unbelievable access. Many fond thanks to the terrific participants and attendees at the Highlander World Wide 8 (HLWW8) convention in Vancouver, who graciously invited me to participate and received me with warmth and enthusiasm. Thank you to the members of the listserv HIGHLA-L for allowing me to lurk and learn all these years as well as the many fan-produced websites I have feasted on in the writing of this book.

A special thank you to David Abramowitz for taking time to answer my questions with his wisdom and insights; to Ken Gord for taking an interest in this work and committing thoughtful, informative, and witty at-length answers to email; and to Adrian Paul for reading "The Immortal Cosmopolitan!"

This book would never have come together without the early interest and sustained support, crucial critical feedback, considered advice, and continued encouragement provided by Jayne Fargnoli who served, along with Margot Morse, at Wiley-Blackwell, as my guide through the specificities, peculiarities, surprises, and joys of publishing a book.

Peer reviews throughout the process of writing this manuscript have been invaluable, making the book you are holding much smarter, clearer, and more insightful than it otherwise would have been, thanks to my anonymous reviewers. Nitin Govil deserves (and has) my abundant gratitude for his generous response to this manuscript and the extended time

and enthusiasm he committed to reading, thinking, correcting, and encouraging its improvement. If this book proves less than a "crucial intervention" it is through no fault of his, only mine.

Thank you Lily and Charlotte for your curiosity, your *joie de vivre*, and especially your patience. Finally this book simply would not have been possible without the boundless support, sympathy, sacrifice, patience, motivation, transcription, speed-reading, and practicality provided (usually) with good humor and indulgence by the simply wonderful, completely incomparable Elizabeth Horn. Thank you.

INTRODUCTION

The Time and Space of Television in Transition

> *The sky above the port was the color of television, tuned to a dead channel. (William Gibson,* Neuromancer*)*

From a few national broadcasters to hundreds of digital channels and from a box in the living room to screens of every size, everywhere, television does not mean what it once did. This book is about both the transformations and the continuities in recent television programming as an industry reorganizes itself around changing economic, institutional, and technological conditions. Global economic shifts, regulatory liberalization, and myriad technological changes have redefined television and its cultural role. For more than two decades popular and scholarly discourse on convergence, new media, and technology has been busy predicting the utter demise of television, imagining the ways it will dissolve into new technologies and cultural practices. And yet, more than a quarter-century after William Gibson's novel helped popularize the word "cyberspace," it has become more difficult than ever to even picture the color of a *dead* television channel, so ubiquitous and plentiful is TV programming. Less enchanted by the imagination of what comes after television than with the stubborn persistence of what remains on television and the telling (if at times admittedly desperate) strategies used to keep it there, this book seeks to interrogate the conditions and practices of contemporary television culture.

It is of course true that television is and always has been in transition. Little about television ever remains static, from images on the screen to seasonal programming schedules, from personnel to labor agreements, and from technology to regulatory schemes. Indeed the history of the television industry is filled with moments of transition experienced as crises, replete with dire predictions, panicked rhetoric and a shuffling

of personnel and practices. The current crisis in television's transition, however, is increasingly registered well beyond the industry itself, with popular media, public discourse, and even casual viewers noting changes in the experience and meaning of television. New institutional and narrative strategies are emerging to compensate for and capitalize on these changes. *Television in Transition* argues that this particular transition is in fact symptomatic of a more seismic shift in the institutional practices of a television industry increasingly concerned not only with the small screen but also with the whole world and multiple media outlets. This book analyzes a series of specific case studies to reveal the spatial (transnational) and temporal (transmedia) assumptions that increasingly constitute the prerequisites for television production, circulation, and even viewing.

Since its start broadcast television has operated with the twin strategies of expanding space and containing time. The broadcast networks strived for the largest spatial reach (most affiliates, strongest signals, etc.) while enforcing the temporal simultaneity and ephemerality of the programming they broadcast. If the very earliest television technologies made "liveness" a requisite, ensuring that viewing was limited to the time (and duration) of the broadcast, the enforcement of such strictures soon became entirely artificial. Such temporal restriction was crucial to the economy of scarcity upon which broadcasting was premised (tune in on Channel 4 at 8:00 or you will miss it, maybe forever). This economy of scarcity placed a premium on (limited) access to broadcast programming, allowing broadcasters – both commercial and public service – a means of managing the risk and unpredictability of audiences. If the audience was to see the programming at all, they could tune their receivers to one channel and gather in front of their screens at one time.

The transition in television described by this book is actually the prolonged acquiescence by the established television industry to institutional changes in this relationship to time and space. For the largest broadcast networks, spatial reach has practically reached its limits with the global saturation of potential audiences in television signals. Therefore industry competitors can no longer claim the advantage of reaching into more homes than one another, nor can they continue to expand their market geographically (at least not into new markets not already saturated in television). Space is saturated. The artificial scarcity of programming imposed through temporal limitations, meanwhile, has

been superseded or circumvented by deregulated competition and consumer technology. Time must therefore be expanded. The drawn-out response to these changing conditions by television programmers has been the increasing assumption of spatial saturation in combination with growing temporal expansion (see it first on Channel 4 at 8:00, then again on Saturday, then on cable, then online, then on DVD, etc., etc.). The economy of scarcity that informed all levels of programming decisions is being haltingly replaced by an economy of abundance. Where once access to a program was carefully timed and that time greedily delimited in order to make the program valuable and draw an audience, new strategies for gathering audiences are characterized by the ubiquity of distribution across space and time.

Of course both the scarcity and the abundance are perceived from the television audience member's point of view; the industry has rarely suffered a scarcity of programming, only imposed it. Moreover, to characterize this on-going transition this way is not to suggest that viewer access to programming has become unencumbered or without cost or that television industry intellectual property holders and distributors do not profit from new means of distribution. Instead it suggests that the space and time considerations upon which television's institutional practices have been premised are changing, impacting first and foremost the established broadcast network practices for gathering (and for commercial outlets, selling) an audience. It is for this immediate reason that, for the television industry, such a dramatic transformation in the conception of the purpose and practice of the time and space of television programming has been experienced as a crisis, catalyzing change in institutionalized practices. For viewers, meanwhile, it is at a minimum clear that programming is changing in response. It seems to be asking for new and different forms of "attention" from viewers, offering, on one hand, blazingly eye-catching aesthetic and iconographic imagery to stand out from the clutter and attract momentary attention, thumb poised over the remote. At the same time, programming has become intriguingly complicated in its formal and narrative structure, asking the curious for their sustained and focused attention. Meanwhile, this same programming has expanded into multiple, technologically new media outlets where viewer attention is characterized by both self-motivation and intersubjective engagement. For the viewer, too, then, television is in transition.

The programming intended to accommodate, even capitalize upon, these changing spatial and temporal relations has accordingly seen both its commercial and its semiotic value changed. Programming must now be designed to travel, both spatially and temporally, as never before. The commercial value of programming is no longer based on its temporal scarcity (now available across so much media, so readily time-shifted), but instead on its ability to "translate" to new spatial geographies (different nations, different broadcast systems, different cultures; and also different formats, different distribution outlets, different screen sizes, etc.). At the same time, the commercial value of programming must be durable, sustain interest, and continue to gather an audience over the time it takes to travel through these spaces. Together, these new criteria place an emphasis on the value of a program's "afterlife," the continued circulation, repackaging, and repurposing of programming beyond its initial iteration.

As a result the very definition of television programming has transformed. Conceived of within the industry as intellectual property with brand potential, programming is no longer simply the content of broadcasting, but instead has become best understood as a textual form disseminated across a multiplicity of viewing and institutional engagements. Any given television channel has become just one way to see (part of) the program on offer. Amid the constantly shifting relations between the constituent units within media conglomerates, this has altered the balance between distribution outlets (control over any one or even several of which is now less significant) and control of intellectual property rights (which attach across different outlets, over space and through time). As the televisual economy transitions from scarcity to abundance, the pressure is on intellectual property to carry spatial abundance (ubiquity) and temporal abundance (afterlife) through this new relationship between industry and viewers. Giving such property life and value is the newly imagined role of television narrative.

As the television industry seeks to balance various degrees of audience investment, from the occasional to the cultish, across these transforming paradigms of time and space, it is nonetheless important to understand this programming not simply as a reflection of the industry's anxiety about these changes (even while, on one level, indeed, it is), but also as narratives featuring characters that attract the (even if sometime only fleeting) interest, imagination, as well as avid fandom of millions of people around the world. These are narratives that offer occasions for various and distinct modes of identification – including dis- and counter-identification – and

spectatorial pleasures. Even as they engage and sustain newly imagined forms of viewer attention, narrative remains the site of affect and interpretation well in excess of industry needs or control.

Building on traditions in television studies from Raymond Williams' theorization of "flow" to John Caldwell's concept of "televisuality," *Television in Transition* therefore proceeds with the understanding that the form of television is inextricable from the industrial infrastructure of media production and distribution. This book intends to integrate methodological approaches too often kept apart by treating the commodity sign of television programming as both an institutionally-derived cultural object and a culturally meaningful narrative. To adequately account for television programming during this period of transition and redefinition, this book examines specific examples of the regulatory, institutional, and economic relations that constitute the contemporary television industry. Such an approach goes a great distance in terms of explaining television's role (both globally and locally) in the economic and political landscape – why it is the way it is, why it tells some stories and does not tell others, how it strives to persist. Yet this approach fails to address why anyone would watch television in the first place; the pleasures and frustrations to be found and what television programming means as it travels around the globe and into people's homes, mobile devices, and lives. These considerations require an approach sensitive to the cultural and textual practices of television, how it signifies and what meanings and indeed affect it may offer. This book seeks to account for the peculiar biography of the contemporary television commodity as it travels through space and time by combining both of these approaches, the institutional and the textual. This study argues for and demonstrates the need to blend institutional and political economic analysis of contemporary television with textual and cultural readings of television programming. Televisual texts are treated as sites of both fact and interpretation. This is accomplished not with recipes for television study but with specific, concrete examples that provide telling models of an integrated approach to text and institution that does not simply reduce one to an effect of the other. In this way the epochal transformations in the television industry can be understood in terms of the site that matters most for most people: the programming. But the programming that arrives on the screen is at the same time understood in the context of the route it took to get there. Such an approach seeks to offer a new account of how innovation takes place within the television industry's management of predictability, risk, and familiarity.

Innovation has certainly characterized this era of television in transition with the rise of new forms and focus in much of television's programming. Were this to be an all-encompassing survey, or even a comprehensive summary of the era's major programming trends, it would need to substantially account for, for example, the rise of reality television programming and its derivations; the emergence of single-camera sitcoms; the growth of programming and channels featuring and aimed specifically at demographic minorities; the success of premium subscription cable as a bastion of self-declared "quality" programming; etc. Rather than offering such an overarching summary of programming types, however, the objective of this study is to examine institutional and textual implications of television's transition. It does so with a consistent point of reference, examining a single, stalwart programming type across four distinct and revealing examples.

There remains much to be learned not only from what is new but also from what remains the same on television during periods of transition. It is particularly productive, given the transformations and changing strategies examined here, to consider the way that certain kinds of programs have been imagined to compensate for what has been experienced as rapid change and unpredictability. For television studies, this means examining not only programming that has emerged during such an era, but also (re) focusing on types of programming that have endured, been retooled and repurposed, and relied upon to negotiate these transitions. It also means focusing critical attention not only on the most exceptional, formally innovative, taste-flattering, "buzz"-ed about programming, but also the banal, everyday schedule-fillers that, after all, constitute the bulk of programming schedules.

Several years ago I wrote that the real action on TV was in reality programming (Shimpach 2002). Certainly reality shows, in their recent pervasive growth and perhaps surprising durability as a programming type, with their apparent capitalization on the essence of the television medium, their novel cultural and textual attractions, their globally localizable formats, their union-and-residual-averse production labor practices, and their propagation of neo-liberal governmentality, encapsulate much of what constitutes contemporary television practices (see, for example, Andrejevic 2003; Ouellette & Hay 2008). And yet reality programming is not the most revealing site at which to consider television's newly developing relationship to time and space. With such a relatively short history of institutionalized production practices, reality television as it is

currently recognized has not so much undergone the transitions in television as served as but one, albeit significant, symptom of these transitions. On the crucial and changing role of specific kinds of narrative within the changing time and space of television, reality programming, for all its careful manipulations and brilliant post-production, simply cannot comment. The examples considered in this study – a small number drawn from a much larger, long-term trend – instead demonstrate the reliable return to past successes and comfortable narratives that continues to characterize so much television programming amid rapidly changing conditions. So even as reality programming inevitably haunts these pages – in some of the aesthetics, plot points, and marketing analyzed and especially as the implied "other" to these more traditional formats: formally, institutionally, economically – the focus here is on what is new about what is old.

Therefore the action on TV may perfectly well be in action after all. Specifically, this book examines this era's familiar return in television programming to action shows with individual (super)heroes intended to navigate the new, international, multi-channel universe. As new structures of television production and distribution combine with new forms of television programming, the white male hero in particular has been asked again and again to help save the day. Signaling a subjectivity confronted with the possibility of its own demise, this hero, no less than the programming in which he is placed, offers an exemplary engagement with the paradigm of afterlife, repeatedly deferring death through the fantastical mastery of space and time. Yet in the event, this hero has found himself to be an unstable subject, also facing multiple crises and transitions, both external and internal, as he is placed within the transnational destabilization of broadcast television in transition.

The specific examples in the chapters that follow will focus on four institutionally distinct, yet thematically similar case studies, each constituted initially by the run of a television program featuring super heroics: *Highlander: The Series* (1992–8), *Smallville* (2001–present), *24* (2001–present), and *Doctor Who* (2005–present). Institutionally, these programs all represent challenges to the era of the broadcast network, some airing initially in syndication or on new networks, each produced through new institutional arrangements including international co-production and strategies to "runaway" to financially-compelling alternative production locales. Taken in the order listed, these programs begin at the margins of

broadcast television (first-run syndication) and draw increasingly closer (from WB to Fox to BBC) to the center of the traditional broadcast industry (itself now only a part of a much larger television universe, which is in turn only a small part of an again much larger media universe). There is a temporal logic to the choice of these programs taken in this order as well, as the programs closer to the center of traditional broadcasting (and thus the end of this book) have been produced for organizations slower to acquiesce to the changing realities of television in transition. Thus the book concludes by briefly considering the first US commercial television network, NBC, in its eventual, apparent acquiescence to these changing conditions through the example of its recent take on the super heroic in the program *Heroes*. Together these programs demonstrate television's continuity (through their reliance on "reliable" genre, character, casting, and to some extent production styles) in seeking to unite a fracturing television audience in front of a single narrative centered on a white, English-speaking, male hero. They also demonstrate television's transformations (emerging outside the big three US networks, produced to circulate globally, planned with lengthy afterlife in mind, presenting recurring allegories of crisis and impending demise) as they promise to support, among other things, easy translation across state, linguistic, and cultural barriers. Each of these programs has been produced to travel – geographically and temporally – and therefore represents, superficially at very least, their producers' best imagination of the forms, stars, heroes, and stories that will succeed over space and through time amid transforming conditions.

Culturally, meanwhile, these programs span the range from syndicated schedule-filler (*Highlander*) to teen genre (*Smallville*) to critically acclaimed quality television (*24*) to national public service (*Doctor Who*). These programs, in other words, consist of everything from the exceptional object of aggrandizing discourse to the overlooked everyday of television scheduling that typically falls under the radar of cultural arbiters. Textually, too, these shows have much in common beyond what they represent in terms of behind-the-camera transformations. For example, from a programmer's point of view, each is a version of an hour-long action drama, specifically designed to attract and hold viewer attention amid the increasing clutter and competition of contemporary television. To that end, each of these programs is spectacular to behold, with aesthetic, iconographic, and formal components constituted well in excess of mere function. Moreover, these shows combine action elements with

recognizable traits of other popular and/or spectacular genres: romance; science-fiction/fantasy; espionage; domestic drama; etc. With the exception of *24*, each of these programs combines an episodic narrative structure (where the hour ends with a clear resolution) with ongoing serial narrative elements (developed over the course of many episodes). Thematically, each program offers fantasies of transcendence, of temporal and spatial mobility that serve, almost allegorically, to underscore their very conditions of production and circulation. They do this by each re-imagining their hero as both in constant crisis and as the savior of civilization (or meta-textually of television). Each focuses on the super-heroic exploits of a man with powers beyond any of his cohort, embodying neo-liberal fantasies of spatial and temporal mobility, whether it is Duncan MacLeod's immortality, Jack Bauer's rapid non-stop commutes across Los Angeles County, Clark Kent's special-effects laden super-mobility, or the Doctor's grimly bemused travels through time and space. At the same time, each calls up new questions of political, economic, and cultural citizenship, crossing borders, splitting affinities, and pushing boundaries through reinterpretations of long-time televisual representational themes (white masculinity, heroism, nation, genre, etc.) within moments of transformation and perceived crisis.

These programs signal relatively innovative efforts to rework, reinvent, and "save" television, each representing a specific, important response to television in transition. At the same time, they each return to and rely upon representations of "super" white men resolving action-filled narratives with various degrees of violence. Thus this book will be submitting each of these programs to the multiple critical pressures of an integrated methodology that asks these texts to tell us what they have to say about television and about the world in which they travel and signify. While the case study chapters that follow therefore focus on a single type of programming in order to produce a cumulative argument, the approach taken to analyze them is equally applicable to other types of programming (e.g. sitcoms, reality, news, soap opera, HBO, etc.). Nonetheless, the particular programs chosen for this study are different enough from one another to allow for detailed examples of some of the significant changes behind the camera, but similar enough in terms of genre, narrative, and character to allow for comparative studies of meaning amid the recent and ongoing transformations in production and distribution. These are popular shows with surprisingly complex meanings that also illustrate important aspects of television in transition.

Prior to the consideration of these four programs the scene will be set by establishing the context for this era of transition as well as for the approach taken in the consideration of each program. Chapter 1 details institutional factors, offering a brief history of industry practice, regulatory and technological changes, and the place of programming within the larger scheme of television broadcasting. Through this brief history of the television industry in transition, the changing institutional role of narrative and the rising significance of a program's afterlife will emerge. Chapter 2 contextualizes textual factors significant to the programs considered in the following chapters. Beginning with the interrelationships between narrative, genre, and gender, this chapter queries the role of the hero in television programming. As "mainstream" continues to be conflated with white masculinity despite all contrary evidence and amid television's rapidly fragmenting audiences, channel proliferation, and shrinking revenue, this chapter considers the time and place of heroes effectively encountering all manner of assault on their claims to universal signification. Their subjectivity, however, bears the scars and pressures of temporal and spatial transcendence. Chapter 3 offers strategies to consider for blending these critical contexts into an integrated method that accounts for and draws on both the institutional and the textual in considering television programming. This integration of textual and institutional approaches is theorized through television studies, genre critique, and everyday viewing. It is framed as a proposal to the reader of where to watch, how to watch, and what it means while encountering television's texts and accounting for their production.

Chapter 4 begins the case studies. It focuses on *Highlander: The Series* in order to examine the rise of international joint-ventures in television production and distribution financing – looking at the conditions, limits, and implications of such programming around the world. *Highlander* was an early, successful example of a short-lived but significant wave of 1990s first-run syndication focusing on action, violence, and fantasy. Textually charged with the task of balancing international marketability with local accommodation and resonance, *Highlander* added the fantasy of immortality to the ideal of unfettered global mobility. This chapter will analyze this textual fantasy while arguing that the show's production and circulation were constructed to operate in a parallel fashion. *Highlander* was therefore not only a successful alternative business model for millennial television operating outside of the Hollywood production houses, but can also be read as thematizing its own international origin, circulation, and

afterlife. The character of MacLeod's immortality propels him into a life of eternal wandering, losing markers of specific national identity, accumulating material goods and esoteric knowledge, finding home to be everywhere and nowhere. This chapter therefore articulates the neo-liberal reinvention of the extra-national to the international co-production and circulation of *Highlander* and MacLeod, both, as a sort of immortal cosmopolitanism.

Chapter 5 considers the production and the narrative of *Smallville* within a larger media landscape concerned with brand management and conglomerated cooperation. Recasting the well-known narrative and genre expectations of the iconic hero Superman as what was then the archetypal WB teen, *Smallville* embraces the inherent contradictions (other/normal, alien/all-American, interstellar/unworldly) in order to produce a singular hero who embodies a coalition of identities. This same coalition, it was hoped, would constitute the program's audience as the WB planned its (ultimately failed) ascendancy from netlet to mainstream broadcast network. In the character of (initially) a teenaged Clark Kent, *Smallville* offers one of Time-Warner's most durable, profitable, and recognizable trademarked brands, Superman, capable of traveling across multiple media outlets faster than a speeding bullet (even if without his trademarked insignia and costume). By building on the WB's focus on the teen demographic to present a narrative featuring a cultural superhero at a time in his life before he was a superhero, *Smallville* offers a Clark Kent flatteringly presented to a primarily young audience as forever deferring his entrance into destiny and myth and thus instead sustaining his (narrative) potential.

Chapter 6 considers efforts to stand out from the glut and clutter of multi-channel programming by offering a television series as a sustained programming stunt. This chapter examines *24* as a text featuring rogue, individual heroism nevertheless constantly and utterly dependent upon an infrastructure of the latest technology, complex bureaucracy, and the sustainability of novelty. This chapter will parallel such heroism with the series' stunt conceit (takes place in "real time"), success in afterlife, and neo-conservative genesis amid changing geopolitical realities in order to argue that such a fantasy of reactionary heroism only thinly veils the structural conditions of the show's success. The program *24* offers insight into the strategies of the "fourth network," Fox, during this period of rapid industry transformation and demonstrates the bigger budget, network response to these changing conditions, in which

innovative production style is combined with an elaborate, multi-character narrative to establish "quality" television. This important program has bolstered Fox's ratings and prestige at a time when the network's standing appeared to be under threat by the very transitions it helped augur in becoming the successful fourth network. As such, this program asks us to consider, both on-screen and behind the camera, the politics, violence, and representation of crisis (televisual, political, gendered) through a hero who might function as national allegory during a period of perpetual crisis as the geopolitical is encountered in professional and domestic life.

Chapter 7 considers the relationship between new iterations of nation and narrative in the regeneration of the BBC's own classic series *Doctor Who*. As the BBC reconsiders its cultural role amid growing commercial challenges within the liberalized regulatory schemes of Great Britain and around the world, the program's hero, a (charmingly British) alien Time Lord, has regenerated into increasingly younger forms while remaining nonetheless safely familiar. Not immune to the same pressures of transition despite its public service mandate and funding scheme, the BBC has responded to television's changing time and space in ways borrowed from commercial broadcasters and in ways emphasizing its special relationship with its public. As the return but also the regeneration of an iconic and beloved classic program, *Doctor Who* demonstrates both the global nature of television's transitions and the BBC's specific efforts to itself regenerate amid them as a vital national treasure. In this program the Doctor himself has now been tellingly refigured as perhaps the last of his kind, forever (literally through time travel and regeneration) returning to Earth (and especially Great Britain) where he is simultaneously greeted as familiar friend and suspect alien.

The book concludes with a brief consideration of NBC's *Heroes*. This program has offered a multi-cultural ensemble of flawed heroic characters on a network once the symbol of broadcast preeminence, but now hemorrhaging viewers. Finally acquiescing (too late?) to television's spatial and temporal transitions, *Heroes* was conceived for NBC primarily as a multimedia property whose text would be disaggregated over multiple media outlets. Secondarily one of those outlets (if still the most expensive, prestigious, and viewed) would be broadcast television. *Heroes*' success and failures suggests the continuing efforts to negotiate the time and space of television in transition.

The circulation of all these television programs, but also, and rather distinctly, the stories they narrate, are involved in complex and revealing new negotiations of time and space and identity. Their story is offered here to the student of television – whether situated on the sofa, in the production studio, the classroom, or ivory tower – to consider in her or his own space and time.

CHAPTER 1

Television in Transition

Television in the new century looks and feels different. While it remains possible to simply "watch television" – it is still available as a continuous flow of aural and video "wallpaper" – there are increasingly more means and incentives to watch specific programs. Television has been asking for more and different kinds of attention. Television is more visually arresting, nearly always displaying what John Thornton Caldwell has described as a "stylistic exhibitionism," symptomatic of developing institutional practices of "televisuality" (1995). These practices now extend from news programming that employs holograms to sitcoms shot feature-film style with a single camera to the use of computer-generated imagery (CGI) on daytime serials. Narrative formal structures have changed emphasis as well, with episodic seriality[1] the new norm in prime-time narrative programming and plot temporality less likely to be exclusively linear, whether in dramas from *Lost* to *Life on Mars* or sitcoms from *Coupling* to *How I Met Your Mother*. New programming forms have become abundant, from "infotainment" and "reality" shows to original cable programming that ranges from subscription-only high-end "quality" narrative to entire channels focused on home renovation or food preparation or pet ownership. Individual television programs, meanwhile, are more likely to be available in more places, effectively expanding temporal access to a single episode (or entire season) of a favorite program that might now be broadcast one night, shown on cable later that week, available for "streaming" from the network website or Hulu.com or on-demand from a cable provider later that day, downloadable from iTunes the next week, available on DVD later that year, and in syndication soon thereafter. At the same time, the television program, as aired, is increasingly likely to be only part of a larger possible experience, which may also include extensive and multiple related websites, short, tangential episodes for internet or mobile phone

viewing, associated periodicals, books, and documentaries (even if only available as a DVD "extra"), and related merchandising from t-shirts to videogames[2] (see, for example, Booker 2001; Jenkins 2006). The temporal scarcity of television programs is being replaced with incentives for temporal investment.

This is because television is under threat. The transformation of television from public service or, in the US, three national commercial networks, to what has been variously described as a "multichannel" universe, "post-network" era, "convergence culture," and /or potentially democratic Do It Yourself (DIY) period of television, has not gone undocumented.[3] Neo-liberal economic policies have led to market logics replacing regulatory controls even as the development and growth of cable, satellite, and digital delivery technologies have undermined the spectrum "scarcity" alibi for such controls in the first place. Where once public service broadcasters, endorsed, regulated, and perhaps funded by the state, had actual or near national monopolies on television broadcasting, now they are increasingly on the defensive amid a proliferation of commercial alternatives. Where not so long ago, in the US, competition for television audiences existed almost exclusively between ABC, CBS, and NBC, now more networks (Fox, CW, Univision, MyNetworkTV, etc.) have joined a competition that includes an array of several hundred (and still-counting) channels of television programming distributed to viewers by cable, telephone company (teleco), and/or direct broadcast satellite systems (DBS). Moreover, these distribution systems increasingly offer, in addition to programming channels, on-demand options, broadband internet service, voice over internet protocol (VoIP), and wireline telephony. These expanding options have been further joined by new consumer technologies from the remote control to the personal computer. Meanwhile, the expectation of costly "production values" has grown even as audiences have splintered – spatially and temporally – across the new multitude of channels and accompanying consumer electronics, which offer both time-shifting and simply alternative options to television viewers.

Considering these relatively recent and still proliferating transformations in television, Lynn Spigel has recently summarized their trajectory, arguing that "if TV refers to the technologies, industrial formations, government policies, and practices of looking that were associated with the medium in its classical public service and three-network age, it appears that we are now entering a new phase of television – the phase that

comes after 'TV' '' (2004: 2). This phase that comes after TV has been accompanied, indeed facilitated by an increasingly powerful multinational commercial media sector. Nonetheless, it has been largely experienced as a crisis within the existing television industry, regardless of who profits. The entire paradigm of broadcasting is being reconceived, which has proved threatening to those whose knowledge, practices, and livelihoods have been premised on that paradigm.

The programming produced for television during this period is therefore unavoidably a product of this crisis mentality. Individual television programs have taken on even greater significance and now face newly heightened pressure to aggregate audiences across media platforms and distribution outlets. For viewers and the industry alike, television programming must function as a familiar and reliable touchstone amid an increasingly uncertain infrastructure and set of practices. In all significant ways, therefore, television is in transition.

Television Industry

The growth of new corporate media conglomerates, global in their operations and outlook; new technologies of distribution and reception; new protocols of viewing; and even the changing regulatory environment and the economic, political, and ideological understandings that inform it, are not the primary focus of this book. Instead they are the ever-present context for the focus of this book. This book remains intently interested in these developments, but examines them not for their own sake but for the responses they have so far evoked, most significantly in the ways in which these developments have material effects and meaning at the site that matters most to people outside of the television industry: the programming. To understand these responses, their nature, intentions, and scope better, it is worth briefly rehearsing how the television industry, particularly its program producers and distributors, has understood and conducted its business.

Consider the influential example of US television. Throughout the so-called network era in the US, the three major commercial broadcast networks functioned essentially as programming distribution companies. Rather than produce their own programming, they each licensed programs produced by other companies to air. With few national broadcast networks licensing programming from many production companies,

these producers were forced to "deficit finance" most of their shows, charging the networks less to air them than they cost to produce. The networks distributed this programming to contractually-affiliated, but independently-owned, stations[4] that were compensated by the networks to "clear" that programming to air, along with some national advertising. The programming, packaged into "dayparted" (e.g. "primetime" or "late night") schedules and heavily, nationally promoted by the networks, was mostly designed to be appealing to a mass audience, imagined as multiple instances of a middle-class nuclear family gathered around a home's only television, without anyone registering objections strong enough to motivate the trip across the room to change the channel.[5] Programs that were successful enough would survive into syndication where they would be licensed to local stations directly, paying off the production deficit and generating profit for the producer while filling the air-time not supplied by the affiliated network.[6]

For commercial networks and broadcast stations alike, this was all done in order to provide programming that would aggregate an audience that could in turn be essentially sold to (actually, promised in advance to) advertisers who would pay (by the eyeball, as it were) to have their commercial spots aired on television. Thus, in order to aggregate as large an audience as possible at the times promised to advertisers, it was crucial to have the broadest geographic (spatial) reach while controlling (temporal) scarcity. For broadcast stations, geographic reach was a function of signal strength (and frequency spectrum placement), regulated by the Federal Communications Commission. For networks, geographic reach was a function of affiliation agreements with these stations in each of the nation's markets.[7]

For both, programming scarcity was a function of temporal control. Any given episode of any given program would air in any given market once – usually at the time the network decreed, although ultimately decided on by the individual station owner. If the program was still in production, the episode would then likely be repeated once, possibly twice (often the following summer). Then, years later, it might return (somewhat edited to accommodate more commercials, charged a lesser rate) during the day or late at night in off-network syndication. The apparently essential ephemerality of the broadcast signal meant that these would remain the only opportunities to see this program, placing greater value on the temporal window in which they were made available for viewing. By combining this carefully controlled temporal program scarcity with the

greatest possible spatial/geographic reach (most affiliates, most powerful signal, etc.), networks competed with each other for aggregate audience attention that would lead to high advertising dollars by bringing as many eyeballs as possible "together" at the same time. While the programming was important, the television industry, as a business, was primarily defined through access to spatial reach combined with temporal scarcity. The biggest networks gathered the most viewers.

While there was obviously more variation and transformation during this era than a mere summary could suggest, the basic premise, at least, remained apparently unchallenged until the 1980s. By the start of the 1980s a seemingly rapid series of changes in regulation over the television industry, combined with new technological developments, began to transform these basic premises of television broadcasting, destabilizing received practices and introducing new means of access and new competition for the broadcast audience. The audience, meanwhile, became imagined less and less as a national mass and more and more as a fragmented collection of niche identities and interests.

Corporate and Regulatory Transition

In the United States the confluence of regulatory and technological changes became particularly relevant where television signals were delivered by coaxial cable. In the culmination of a trend toward greater deregulation and the facilitation of private industry growth that had been occurring over the course of the 1970s, the FCC (usually at the behest of successive court decisions) had opened the way to the rapid growth of new cable channels and their distribution through corporate system operators[8] (Mullen 2008). Cable-delivered programming became an increasingly available, rapidly growing alternative to broadcast reception. Moreover, these cable channels – which were not networks with affiliated broadcast stations, but rather essentially satellite channels given carriage agreement contracts with various cable system operators – were not subject to the same FCC regulations as national broadcast networks, including the so-called financial interest and syndication regulations (Fin-Syn), imposed during the 1970s to open up access to the television industry by greatly restricting a national broadcast network's ownership of and syndication rights to the programming it distributed.

Community Antenna Television (CATV) companies were at first operators of large antennas coupled to signal boosters that would redistribute distant television signals to local, usually small town, homes through terrestrial, coaxial cable, for an operating fee. Originally introduced to overcome the geographic impediments to broadcast signals in the US, particularly as they were felt in rural areas beyond the normal range of the closest television stations, they served the function of further expanding the spatial reach of broadcast organizations. The deregulation of a number of restrictions governing this cable industry, culminating by the end of the 1970s, meant that cable system operators could now expand their business model to include more channels and offer services in municipalities where broadcast signals could already be received. Within a very few years companies operating cable systems simultaneously in multiple municipalities, known as multi-system operators (MSOs), were providing dozens of additional channels to subscribers around the country previously used to only three networks. Between 1975 and 1980, as cable systems were introduced into more populated areas, basic cable subscribership grew from 9.2 million to 17.7 million households. Between only 1980 and 1981 more than a dozen new cable channels were launched, including CNN, MTV, USA, Cinemax, Bravo, TLC and BET. These joined already nationally available channels such as Pat Robertson's CBN, C-SPAN, ESPN, Nickelodeon, HBO, Showtime, and various "superstations" like WTBS, WGN and WOR (who benefited in particular from the elimination of "anti-leapfrogging" regulations) (Mullen 2003).

From this point cable television became a significant component of the television landscape, offering an ever-growing array of viewing options (see Figure 1.1) that in turn necessitated a mushrooming supply of programming. The number of households subscribing to cable continued its precipitous growth, reaching the remarkable milestone of 50 percent of US homes as early as 1988. This number only increased through the 1990s, reaching 68 percent by 2000 (Lotz 2006). By 2007 86 percent of US television households subscribed to some kind of multi-channel system[9] (National Cable & Telecommunications Association).

For the broadcast networks, the rapid growth of cable meant a new form of national competition for the first time in years. Ultimately it portended the inevitable dispersion of the television audience across the multitude of new channels. While audience ratings numbers for any given program on cable were rarely even comparable to those of the worst-rated networks, it was clear that the terrain of television was changing. At the start of the

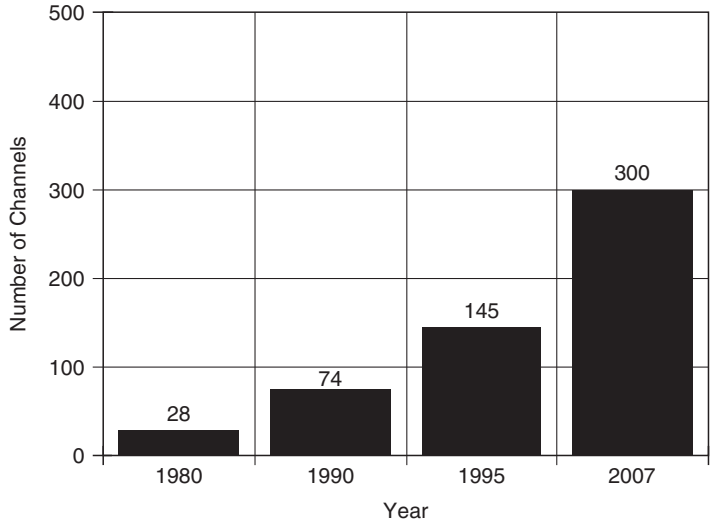

Figure 1.1 The number of cable channels available nationally (in US) *Source:* Allen (2004), Eastman and Ferguson (2009)

1980s, the three broadcast networks combined could claim 90 percent of viewers watching television during primetime. By the end of that decade the combined network share had diminished to 64 percent (Caldwell 1995). In June 1998, *Daily Variety* reported that "for the first week ever, more households tuned to basic cable during primetime than the four [ABC, CBS, NBC, plus Fox] major broadcast networks combined" (Katz 1998). By 2003 *Variety* could report that "basic cable as a category beat the seven broadcast networks [at this point including the prior four plus WB, UPN, and Pax] in household ratings for the first time ever in the November primetime sweeps" (Dempsey 2003: 1). For the broadcast networks, spatial reach was largely saturated (in the US, at any rate) and temporal containment was losing its promise to gather an audience around limited access to a program amid so many other options and distractions, themselves increasingly readily accessed.

Even as their aggregate hold on the television-viewing audience was slipping, however, the number of broadcast networks grew. The Fox Network, launched in 1986 to become the first successful new national broadcast network in the US in more than 30 years, for example, benefited immensely from an increasingly market-oriented Federal Communication Commission. A 1982 FCC regulatory revision had paved the way by

encouraging the growth of new independent television stations (tripling in number by the time Fox went shopping for its own affiliates). The FCC also helped Fox (and thus, the FCC felt, encouraged network competition) by declaring it less than a full network, thereby allowing exceptions to media ownership and Fin-Syn regulations then still restricting the other networks.[10]

Further deregulation followed, changing the structures of the industry. Rules regarding media cross-ownership limits were relaxed,[11] fostering the growth of horizontal integration. Television stations became commodities, bought, sold and traded, while well-financed companies grew and combined as they attempted to capitalize on the growing dearth of restrictions.

At the same time financial interest and syndication regulation was slackened, encouraging the vertical integration of media corporations. With the transitions in television already evident by the early 1990s, Fin-Syn was soon perceived by regulators to have outlived its usefulness, to be unfairly restricting the networks, and to be impeding the all-important market. After several years of increasingly relaxed enforcement, Fin-Syn existed in name only beginning in September 1995. The 1996 Telecommunications Reform Act made the repeal of Fin-Syn official. This opened the floodgates for a series of corporate mergers combining once separate production and distribution companies (studios and networks) under the same parent conglomerate, now legally able to own the programming it also broadcast, so that today ABC and Disney Studios are part of the same company; NBC, Telemundo, and Universal are all part of General Electric;[12] the Fox Network and 20th Century Fox are both part of News Corp; and CBS, as well as Paramount Studios, were for some time both part of Viacom.[13] Single corporate entities were now broadcasting programs they produced, owned, and syndicated. This changed the calculus in decisions regarding which programs got to air, how they were scheduled, and when (or if) they would be cancelled. A new value was placed on individual programs, making their ownership a significant factor in broadcasting and distribution decisions.

Companies that produced television programming but did not control their own means of broadcasting it, meanwhile, became increasingly wary. Thus the 1990s saw efforts to create even more national broadcast networks. Paramount Television Group's (at the time) chief, Kerry McCluggage, explaining his company's formation of UPN, recalled that with the demise of Fin-Syn:

> We really felt that the studios that did not have their own distribution outlet would get leveraged in the marketplace by networks demanding ownership in the programming as kind of the price of admission for access to their schedule. And that pretty much played out (quoted in Daniels & Littleton 2007: 23).

Similarly, Time Warner, with no existing broadcast network remaining to simply acquire, felt that starting its own was "a strategic imperative" (quoted in Daniels & Littleton 2007: 18) considering its television production division, Warner Bros. Television, was one of the leading producers of successful and profitable network television programming (with shows like *ER* and *Friends*). In order to guarantee a national broadcast outlet for the programming it produced while continuing to maintain full ownership rights to that programming, Time Warner launched the WB network in January 1995. Time Warner conceived the new network as a strategic asset that would add (or at least maintain) value to its television production division given an uncertain, deregulated future. It was a decision based on maintaining the value of intellectual property. Responding to the changing dynamics of the television industry's infrastructure, a new broadcast network was created in order to maintain the value of a company's television *programs*. Media conglomerate Viacom, with a very similar strategy in mind, launched the United Paramount Network (UPN) five days later.[14] The maintenance of intellectual property and its leveraging across space, time, and different media signaled the nature of television's transition.

Technological Transition

The proliferation of alternative channels transforming the space and time of television, meanwhile, was abetted by the growth of new consumer electronics developed and marketed throughout this era. The navigation of the growing range of new independent channels, networks, and cable offerings was facilitated, for example, by the growing ubiquity of remote control devices (RCD), now standard with the purchase of a television or related consumer electronics. Where once television presumably had to be sufficiently objectionable to motivate a trip across the room to change channels (or turn off the television or even merely lower the volume), now, with so many more channels available to view, controlling the television and switching channels was possible with only the small movement of a

finger. The remote control, of course, facilitated "zapping" to another channel to avoid commercial breaks (or boring bits) and "grazing" to see what else was on. While this is now simply taken for granted as an absolute minimal level of interaction, it registered at the time as a new and transformative behavior, altering established programming strategies and placing even more pressure (and potentially value) on television programming.

The next level of home-based "control" accompanied the domestic commercial introduction of the video cassette recorder (VCR), available to consumers in the second half of the 1970s. The VCR enabled viewers to "time shift" programming by recording it onto magnetic tape for later viewing, practice "zipping" past recorded commercials (or boring parts, for that matter) with the (included) RCD's fast-forward button or, alternatively, to watch pre-recorded (uncensored, uninterrupted) content in lieu of television programming all together.[15] Home ownership and use of the VCR steadily rose over the course of the 1980s from less than 20 percent to nearly 70 percent of US homes by the end of the decade (Küng-Shankleman 2000). The artificially imposed temporal scarcity and supposedly essential ephemerality of television programming began to be circumvented.

Subsequent technological developments have accelerated the transformations in the space and time of television. Home satellite, direct broadcast satellite, and fiber optics have supplemented coaxial cable as technologies of home television delivery supporting hundreds of channels of programming as well as video on demand (VOD) and pay-per-view options. Consumer electronic devices ranging from the digital video disc (DVD) and digital video recorder (DVR) to the personal computer (PC) and video game console variously offer television viewers control, distraction, and/or direct interaction in relation to television programming. Outside the home various mobile television platforms have become available, from portable DVD players and portable video games that double as viewing screens to mobile phones and iPods, to further complicate the transforming space and time of television.

Television *programs* therefore have become the center of a business strategy unsure of the future of distribution and reception; indeed of how, how often, when, or where viewers will watch. With so many, varied means of distribution and reception, television has come increasingly to rely upon the ownership of intellectual property to overcome uncertainty. It is now individual programs that are meant to entice consumer spending

over space and through time, across all manner of distribution. Such programming is increasingly designed to be promiscuous, ubiquitous, and to transcend specific times, screens, devices and borders.

Global Transition

Facing the saturation of domestic markets, the television industry has sought to continue growing the geographic space of television through international expansion. As audiences have been perceived to fragment, US television has become increasingly aggressive in pursuing the international expansion of its viewership. Where once it was possible to consistently profit from the domestic market and simply undersell international competition for additional revenue, the global audience is now an increasingly integral part of programming and fiscal strategy for the US television industry. International distribution deals have become a necessity for deficit-financed television productions, particularly expensive hour drama series. It is unusual now for a successful US network program to be unavailable around most of the planet, whether it is *24* in Great Britain or *Grey's Anatomy* in Turkey or *Heroes* in Thailand.

Technological, industrial, and regulatory changes have been endemic not only to the US, however. The often globally popular programming and rather uniquely commercial history of US television have served as influential models for broadcasters and television industries around the world. The US model – with its particular history as a commercial, market-driven, competitive industry rather than a public service – has served as harbinger of practices increasingly being adopted and encouraged around the world. The US industry thus serves as a reference for state and public service broadcast systems faced with increasingly liberalized oversight, regulation, and competitive fiscal regimes amid global economic trends endorsing privatization and market-orientation. Faced with new forms of competition (for the first time for some systems), institutional responses have varied. In many cases, however, the liberalization of television markets has occasioned a shift in institutional practices toward the emulation of commercial systems (with whom they are increasingly asked to compete). Programming in many systems around the world is now expected to be competitive, readily exportable to a variety of markets, and yet to continue to fulfill public service and local state mandates.

At the same time, it is not always readily apparent how to delimit television production or signification by national border. Amid the changing regulatory environments and new technologies of television, the 1990s saw rapid global growth in international joint ventures, such as treaty-based co-productions, co-ventures, and twinning packages. Such arrangements offered numerous incentives. International co-productions, for example, are designed to combine tax incentives with quota exceptions in order to facilitate the pooling of resources and access to markets, allowing smaller, less well-financed television industries to compete better with expensive commercial productions (particularly US productions).[16] Other strategies have included simply producing television in alternative national locations considered more advantageous. So-called runaway productions, for example, might be produced by a US company, but outside the Los Angeles area. Relocating physical production facilities to the "Cheap White North" of Canada,[17] or to Mexico, or New Zealand, as three common examples, offers such incentives as cheaper production facilities, non-union labor, tax abatements, and even occasionally less restrictive safety and labor constraints. This is not to mention new and visually interesting exterior locations.

Benefiting from what Miller et al. (2005) have described as the new international division in cultural labor (NICL), many of these productions utilize new media and digitalization technologies to produce programming not essentially located in any one place (but presumed to appeal to many). A program, like *Smallville* (see Chapter 5), produced by Warner Bros. Television, for example, might have a cast and crew combining US, Canadian, and British citizens and run physical production facilities in Vancouver, while maintaining writing staff, special-effects facilities, and various post-production crews at multiple locations in and around Los Angeles, all connected through specialized high-speed networks (Graser 2001).

Efforts to reduce above-the-line production costs (particularly writing and star salaries and residuals), while featuring casts meant to be drawn from the television audience itself, emerged in the flowering of unscripted reality television programming during this period. This genre proved exceptionally amenable to global circulation and local accommodation, although largely through the licensing of format concepts rather than actual filmed episodes. Such an example further demonstrates the alternative means developed for the continued expansion of the space of television. Increasingly such expansion has relied on the carefully policed

ownership of intellectual property rather than any specific means of delivery. By licensing the format of a program such as *Big Brother* or *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, intellectual property rights holders could market a concept globally, while local broadcasters could tailor details of a program to local practices and tastes (McMillin 2007; Moran & Malbon 2006; Straubhaar 2007). Thus the British program *Weakest Link* could air in more than 40 countries, but feature local references and be hosted by local or regional celebrities. Even program formats that failed in one national market (e.g. *Power of 10* hosted by Drew Carey on CBS in the US 2007–8) could prove popular and successful in another (e.g. *Dus Ka Dum* hosted by Salman Khan on Sony TV in India) (Hasan 2008).

Whether it was the format or the program that was distributed globally, whether it was produced within a single national context or across multiple national borders, the television industry inevitably began to make accommodations for the increasingly necessary transnational travel of its programming during this period of television in transition. Programming, with traits that made format and/or narrative supposedly more transparent, lead the way. Thus reality programming proved cheap to produce and readily transportable as a format. Narrative programming, whose value is derived from specific stories and characters, meanwhile, has tended to rely upon spectacular special effects, visceral action, and fascinating visuals to assure interest across national, cultural and linguistic barriers. Requiring such considerable production investment has meant that this narrative programming is asked to travel as produced, rather than as a (prohibitively costly) locally customizable format. The burden of appealing to multiple local sites of viewing is therefore placed on the narrative and the look of the program.

Programming Transition

Indeed the look of programming everywhere took on new significance. Amid literally hundreds of new viewing options, increasingly in multiple global locations, at any given time, television programming was an increasingly cluttered terrain, making it difficult for individual programs (even channels) to get noticed, attract viewers, or crucially, to justify their advertising rates. As John Thornton Caldwell (1995) has compellingly argued, the dramatically new variations in the look of television programming that accompanied this rapidly growing array of alternatives developed precisely to attract attention from amid this clutter. In the

process, it has inspired further reconsiderations of the specific role of programming in engaging audiences.

For decades, television's iconic style had been what Caldwell calls zero-degree television production, in which the production style consisted of "uniform settings, lighting, looks, and cutting" regardless of network and throughout program after program, most of which looked as if they always took "place between the flat and oppressive hours of ten a.m. and two p.m. – not exactly the cinematographer's magic hour" (1995: 58). With the emergence of cable and VCRs in particular, viewers were suddenly exposed to a variety of aesthetic practices, visual styles, and narrative variations they had rarely encountered on their television. This included the lavish "production values" of recent feature films on premium movie channels like HBO (or the VCR) as well as the multi-screen display, videographic-title-heavy look of early CNN and the visually obtuse, narratively garbled, rapidly edited, and thus aesthetically exciting music videos of MTV (played one after another, with no apparent narrative or even logical connection).

It was clear that through some combination of design (getting attention as a brand new alternative to network television) and necessity (limited budgets and options in terms of producing content), cable channels were not providing programming that was simply the least objectionable. All this rapidly growing competition combined with radical changes in the way television could look, encouraged networks to begin emphasizing, exhibiting, and experimenting with the iconicity, the aesthetic look, and the style of their programming. The established broadcast networks responded initially by demonstrating their significant fiscal advantage over all new comers, licensing programming with rich, lavish, feature-film-style "production values" demonstrating a new sense of aesthetics. Content also became potentially more controversial, with sex, violence, complex situations, and language not always in deference to the presumed nuclear family viewing together. Least objectionable programming became only one network option for certain periods of programming. Other options meant that the flat, even lighting, non-descript locations, and blandly straightforward visual style gave way to the spectacularization of color, lighting, music, cinematography, and editing as well as to stylized dialogue, elaborate production numbers, self-conscious performances, and self-referentiality. Programming was distinguished through a self-conscious "stylistic exhibitionism" offering visual and aural interest ranging from "liveness" and videographic effects to the aping of cinematic lushness and production values (Caldwell 1995).

Such attention to what Caldwell has termed "televisuality" as part of the production and programming practices of television could not avert the decline of network dominance. The array of shows eagerly exhibiting a range of styles from the cinematic to the videographic, however, did draw further attention to the growing significance of individual programming decisions. This renewed attention to the production styles of individual programs corresponded to institutional transformations relying on the copyright and trademark value of individual programs as the new center of the television industry. Programs had to look good in order to attract attention amid so many alternatives, but increasingly they also needed to intrigue and sustain interest. This interest had to be sustained, moreover, not simply long enough to compel a viewer to set her/his remote down, but over an entire afterlife in which the program could be viewed multiple times in multiple contexts for years to come.

Television Property and Narrative

While the formerly big three networks continued – perhaps eventually beyond the point of credibility – to assert their superior ratings numbers, arguing that they remained the only true place to reach a mass, national audience, they nevertheless scrambled to compensate for what they perceived to be the rapid fragmentation of that audience. Amid such easy access to so many different channels and new media, individual programs were increasingly seized upon as the crucial element that would (or would not) attract an audience. As Michael Curtin observed:

> In this environment, media producers find that the branding of products is often more important than futile attempts to control the mode of distribution. Unlike the network era when the control of a few national channels was the key to profitability, neo-network television firms focus on marketing, promotion, and the control of intellectual property (Curtin 2004: 281).

With the growth of new television channels and the ability to quickly navigate among them, programs have become, first of all, an increasingly important means of drawing attention amid the clutter. Moreover, it has become increasingly clear, as Curtin argued, that "given a greater range of choices, audiences are drawn to the products by textual elements – characters, story lines, special effects – rather than by the technological and regulatory

constraints formerly imposed on the delivery system'' (Curtin 2004: 281). Stylistically exhibitionist, character-driven narrative television programs have taken on a new sort of value during these transitions.

Mitigating against the increasing uncertainty of a fragmenting audience is only one component in this new attention to television programs. As individual companies have been increasingly encouraged to produce, broadcast, distribute, and own their programs, they have come to understand them as (intellectual) property in which they have invested time and capital. From such a perspective, strategies of artificial scarcity have become less desirable as a means of producing value from such property, even as these strategies have become increasingly readily circumvented. Servicing a television network's broadcast schedule and ad sales is now imagined as only the first step in a program's sustained and expanding life as a valuable property. Ultimately, the expanding spatial reach of a temporally limited program is being replaced as an institutional strategy by another that emphasizes the spatial and temporal ubiquity of access to that program. Rather than artificially imposed temporal limits, from a property owner's point of view, television programs are now understood to benefit from extending and sustaining temporal interest. Even as intellectual property travels spatially and geographically, its greatest value accrues by virtue of its temporal travel as it becomes associated with durable branding strategies that can be attached across media and through time.

This reordering of the space and time of television has become the new strategy for seeking out and aggregating increasingly dispersed audiences. As a result, programming itself has been asked to change, drawing attention to itself from within a crowded programming environment, sustaining attention over time and across media, and traveling across temporal, technological, and national borders. Such changes have altered not only the look of television programming, but also the stories it narrates and the forms of that narrative. These changes to television narrative, their relationship to both an industry in transition and a splintering audience, and the kinds of meanings that emerge all inform the chapters that follow.

CHAPTER 2

The Hero

Narratives of heroic action continue to play an important role mediating and moderating television in transition. Despite the rise of new programming trends and the fragmentation of audiences, this stalwart genre has been increasingly called upon to draw and sustain the attention of audiences over the changing time and space of television. Such programming seems to offer, as one collection has put it, a "high degree of cross-cultural translatability" with kinetic visual thrills, appealing consistent characters, straightforward stories with clear delineations between good and evil, and the genre's iconographic spectacular violence and sensational special effects understood to facilitate "a kind of televisual *lingua franca*" that can be "easily recognized, understood and assimilated in a diversity of contexts and markets" (Osgerby et al. 2001: 28). These are programs that are believed to travel efficiently and effectively through space and time. The action hero, at the same time, appears a particularly useful form of intellectual property, both iconic and heroic, registering great potential for branding and repurposing not only as the program travels across new media, but also in potentially lucratively diverse forms ranging from feature films, video games and websites to paperbacks, comic books, clothing, and coffee mugs. This combination of "translatable" narrative form and lucrative branding potential has meant that despite both relatively high costs (for effects, stars, writers, etc.) and emerging competition (from reality genres to video games), the action on television is in action. It is not surprising then that indeed there has been a boom in heroic action programming during this era. It should not be surprising either, however, that the action hero has encountered the changing space and time of television by refusing to remain static.

As the audience has been perceived to fragment across the rapid expansion of programming outlets, for example, television's action hero has been variously re-imagined in ways intended to pursue and complement

distinct audience fragments. Such pursuit has traversed broadcast, syndication and cable channels, populating television screens with a vast and rapid proliferation and a growing variety of action heroes. Heroic action programming of this era has therefore contributed to an expansion of the scope of possibilities for the representation and subjectivity of protagonists on western television through re-imagined narrative settings and a growing diversity of casting (e.g. *Blade*, *The Crow: Stairway to Heaven*, *M.A.N.T.I.S.*, *Martial Law*). The action hero's pursuit of fragmenting audiences in this period has also further complicated gendered assumptions as the action *heroine* has risen influentially through numerous new iterations in a diverse array of programming on broadcast networks (e.g. *Alias*, *Bionic Woman*, *Birds of Prey*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Dark Angel*, *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles*), in first-run syndication (e.g. *Cleopatra 2525*, *Highlander: The Raven*, *Relic Hunter*, *Sheena*, *V.I.P.*, *Xena: Warrior Princess*), and on cable (e.g. *La Femme Nikita*, *Painkiller Jane*, *Witchblade*). The apparently hetero, white, male action hero, meanwhile, remained a dominant presence on television, if increasingly depicted as under all manner of assault, a conflicted, besieged, unstable subject, facing personal as well as geopolitical crises, transitions, and uncertainty. If perceived audience fragmentation has opened opportunities for many, then, it has presented a threat to others.

Together such programming has followed a logic of distinction through difference, reflecting the corporate need to brand and differentiate cultural offerings aimed at select audience groups amid the clutter of multichannel programming. From the corporate perspective, such difference, in this context, has much less to do with the comprehensiveness, inclusiveness, or diversity of viewpoints actually offered through these new outlets than with the composite audience claimed by the corporate parent (Caldwell 2004; Smith-Shomade 2002). As Lynn Spigel has suggested, "it is clear that the current multichannel landscape is not a world of infinite diversity but rather a sophisticated marketplace that aims to attract demographic groups with spending power" (Spigel 2004: 16–17). If the slowly growing heterogeneity of action heroes on television therefore remains susceptible to charges of marginalization through "niche" targeting and "narrowcasting," the familiar genre nonetheless also bears the pressure of drawing together an increasingly dispersed "mass" audience across rapidly changing media, space, and time.

This charge has been borne in two ways. One understands that these programs *collectively* reach an audience approaching the "mass" of an

earlier era, each show meant to appeal to groups of viewers formerly a part of that larger mass. It is for this reason that, as John Caldwell has noted, "the de facto goal of each new [media] conglomerate is to have within the walls of its extended corporate family a programming niche for every taste culture and social identity" (Caldwell 2004: 69). If a single program or even channel can no longer reasonably be expected to reach the mass audience given so many alternatives, the expansive, vertically and horizontally integrated conglomerate perhaps still can. Managing the fiscal imperatives of the many various segments within corporate conglomerates – each immediately invested in the particular success of an individual program's iteration – however, means that a second strategy for pursuing the dispersed audience persists as well. Here individual programs are created with multiple, composite appeals intended to gather fragmented audiences into a new multiple, composite mass. With the strategic reliance upon temporal scarcity no longer available, this strategy charges the textual and especially narrative appeals of programming properties with the task of gathering an audience. Moreover, this audience is understood now as no longer simply "out there" to be reached, but fragmented and dispersed and therefore requiring active pursuit. Such programs are therefore intended to be as "translatable" as possible, particularly across simultaneous, multiple demographic groups (with spending power) but also across multiple media where these groups might be sought. These programs are asked to both transform themselves in various ways meant to attract a variety of audience fragments and at the same time provide the kind of invisibly self-evident, universal signification their predecessors were presumed to have offered television programmers in the past. Here the history and generic expectations associated with the action genre have meshed well with industry practices that lingeringly persist in conflating universal appeal to a "mainstream" audience with a transcendent white masculinity.[1]

The four programs this book considers in detail are each exemplary for the ways they have offered precedent and have increasingly come to embody the audience-gathering goals of television in transition through their individual, narrow-scale execution. The point here is not whether these programs have actually succeeded in gathering the "broader" ratings of an earlier era, but rather that they have employed novel strategies toward that end in an effort to manage and mitigate the changing conditions of their production and circulation. At the same time, these very efforts may suggest a programming strategy stubbornly pushing against the limits of its reach and encountering the possibility of its own demise.

These are action programs that have been re-imagined to compensate for institutional unpredictability, incorporating changing cultural forms of representation, assimilating transforming viewing practices, and attempting to offer elements of appeal to a variety of audience groups. It is significant, then, that each of these programs, *Highlander*, *Smallville*, *24*, and *Doctor Who*, present re-imagined action heroes who themselves bear the scars and pressures of temporal and spatial transcendence. These actions shows, intended to offer narratives of composite heroes meant to gather composite audiences from multiple fragmenting "niches," themselves bear scars and pressures that reveal both the enduring assumptions and the new practices and meanings of television in the era of transition.

Genre

It is no accident, then, that the history of the action hero is enmeshed in the history of the imperial subject. The contemporary action hero and his narrative adventures, after all, find their early iterations in imperial-era adventure stories written primarily for boys as primers on the ideals and pleasures of imperialism, urging young "readers to manliness"[2] with stories of unfettered travel, unbridled action, and undaunted encounters (Taves 1993). These stories allowed the boys who read them to "play, if only in their imaginations, in the space of empire" (Shohat & Stam 1996: 153). The seemingly effortless geographic mobility afforded to the imperial subject conferred aggrandizement upon the seemingly unbounded, action-oriented individual. The young, white men who were (or became) the aggrandized subjects of these stories motivated the narratives through their penchant for action and resolved conflict through violence informed by grit, wits, and innate skill, securing, in each story, the future of the world for which they were responsible and in the process confirming their masculine identity.

Characters embodying such traits and privilege well prefigured – although certainly inspired – early twentieth century commercialized media storytelling strategies meant to instill aspirations toward similar lifestyles, presumably now more democratically attainable through consumer spending. Readily adapted to the screen at the start of the twentieth century, where their penchant for action displayed well the new medium's inherent technological distinction (these were *moving* pictures, after all), these aggrandized imperial subjects became adventure

heroes. Mobility on screen was represented through kinetic action while narrative resolution was translated into thrilling, spectacularized violence (Bean 2004). Hollywood's own imperial imagination was conveyed through heroic characters whose narrative trajectories propelled them into renewed identities as they encountered expansive new spaces. Giddy movement encountered frontier myth, for example, in the repeated exploits of international movie stars like Douglas Fairbanks' idealized, gendered nationalism presenting an action hero as a universal subject (Studlar 1996).

By mid-century, with Hollywood's cultural and economic imperialism displacing the priorities of an earlier colonialism amid post-war consumerism, the action genre was predictably populated by suave, attractive heroes living adventures of thrilling, exotic excitement, unimpeded by (if clearly aligned to) national, cultural, or state borders. Consumerist identity was asserted by heroes living in style and comfort afforded through aspirational affluence and tasteful consumption (Denning 2003; Osgerby et al. 2001). The imperial subject's unfettered geographic mobility was rearticulated as the aspirational privilege of material affluence. As television gained a growing audience-base, heroic agency and privilege became increasingly aligned with consumerism and personal titivation over a backdrop of exoticized world locations presented now in both the neighborhood cinema and one's own living room. The Cold War consumer-culture exploits of these action heroes offered a fantasy of transcending the banality of both dehumanizing bureaucratization and rapid technological growth (Miller 2001: 18; see also Gallagher 2006: 5–6). Programming from *Mission: Impossible* and *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* to *The Saint* and *The Avengers* to *The Adventures of Superman* and *Batman* offered up extraordinary (if not always completely serious) white men who resolved conflict through direct action and violence while displaying their effortless mastery of urban spaces, new technologies, fashion, and their own bodies.

Indeed as performances that combined visually spectacular derring-do with refined consumption became the central feature of action on screen, the hero's body increasingly became the site at which heroics were marked, measured, and performed. In the cinema and increasingly on television during the second half of the twentieth century, action narratives came to center on visual spectacle and the body of the hero, with, as Susan Jeffords has observed, "the male body itself becoming often the most fulfilling form of spectacle"[3] (Jeffords 1993: 245). In the last decades of the

twentieth century the action hero found himself being looked at. While spectacle, with the pleasures and the perils of the action hero's body at its center, remains the genre's primary source of translatability, that same spectacle of the hero's body, carrying traces of empire and maintaining the presumptions of universal subjectivity, makes visible the perennial condition of white masculinity in crisis, marking it as a site of ongoing conflict.

On television these spectacular, heroic bodies were placed in the context of a genre that was itself facing the crisis of television in transition, altering its role and meaning through deployment in brand new contexts. Genre is where institutional practices converge with textual and cultural expectations and meanings. A genre is, after all, a mode of address that organizes discursive information and is signaled through the repetition and difference of a variety of textual elements (iconography, setting, character-types, plot points, etc.) so as to draw on cultural discourses more expansive than the individual text at hand to suggest expectations and strategies for reading. Genres discipline textuality by suggesting procedures for prioritizing, organizing, and interpreting. This is why the corpus of texts comprising a given genre is so hand-wringingly policed[4] – the expectations produced by the recognition of a genre can be permanently altered – scarred and damaged – by the inclusion of even one "wrong" text to the mix.

The programs examined in the following chapters, as examples of television in transition, do not stand as pure examples (whatever that might be) of the action genre. Instead they leverage their potential audience draw through the incorporation of traits and expectations associated with a number of other popular-culture screen genres. With the explicit narrative interplay of space and time such a central feature of these programs, for instance, each draws readily on science-fiction and fantasy genres to visualize and literalize its hero's relative mobility. *Highlander*, meanwhile, further incorporates historical epic and romance into its occasionally swashbuckling, occasionally stoic action formula. It also features episodes that play primarily as mystery and others as light comedy. *Smallville* includes modes of address signaling variously gothic horror, supernatural mystery, bildungsroman, and teen romance genres in combination with its superheroic action. *24*'s action is imbued as well with aspects of the techno-thriller, the police procedural, and the domestic melodrama. *Doctor Who* includes elements of national allegory, historical adventure, and domestic drama along with its fantastical science-fiction action. With these multiple generic appeals, these programs are meant to build upon

the translatability of action by offering specific audience groups specifically appealing genre expectations drawn from multiple sources. In the process they ask of their heroes a rapid mobility across generic expectations and through various narrative forms of identity.

If each of these programs is a hybrid of multiple genre components, each is then distinguished most prominently by its blending of traditional action elements with significant aspects of the televised domestic melodrama. Linda Williams has persuasively argued that most Hollywood (and Hollywood-inspired) film (and television) narrative ultimately participates in the "deeper coherence" of melodrama, distinguished by clear bifurcations between good and evil characters and narratives that recognize virtue through a "dialectic of pathos and action" (Williams 1998; see also Joyrich 1988). Popular reference to "melodrama" in television, however, typically and more specifically recalls daytime serials (soap operas) sharing a mode of address and narrative attributes borrowed from their radio predecessors and once associated with feature films popularly characterized as women's films, "weepies", and/or family melodramas (Allen 1985, 1995; Kuhn 1984; Modleski 1979, 1983; Spence 2005; see also Elsaesser 1973). This generic mode of address, significantly pre-dating the narrative "complexity" of recent ensemble-cast primetime drama (Mittell 2006), has increasingly characterized all genres of primetime television narrative. It offers a form of televisuality meant to encourage emotional connections with characters through an emphasis on personal and domestic interrelations (with public/professional character goals secondary and in any case, motivated by the personal), with characters that tend to externalize and speak their emotions, and stark (if often famously transient) polar distinctions between moral opposites.

The genre hybrid of action and domestic melodrama moreover endows these programs with a television narrative structure combining the episodic series and the continuing serial (Williams 1994b). This episodic-seriality allows for aspects of narrative complexity while still distinguishing between plot lines in such a way that different groups of viewers can find narrative appeals at different levels of engagement. Typically heroic violence resolves the action plotline in a single episode, but fails to resolve the continuing domestic melodrama. While the villain of the week has been vanquished, satisfying the casual or infrequent viewer, the developing intricacies of personal relationships between recurring characters are furthered, but not resolved, drawing regular viewers and fans back again for the next episodic installment. But the serial structure also means that some of

the issues invoked by the program continue over multiple episodes, taking on lives and accruing meanings of their own, while also undermining heroic masculinity's claim to efficient resolution of problems. For the desired audience, a composite of formal appeals therefore complements the multiple generic appeals these shows offer.

For the action hero of such programs, meanwhile, this interplay between the timely resolution of the episode and the temporal deferment of the serial stands as part of a more complex relationship to temporality that constitutes these characters somewhat in distinction to their heroic predecessors. For instance, as formerly distinct spatiotemporal locations of domestic and professional action are inseparably intertwined, each constantly encroaching on the other, these heroes must manage the time and space of both world-threatening crises and interpersonal and domestic emergencies. Domesticity, informed by the genre of melodrama, involves more than these characters simply having love lives. Their narrative worlds are intertwined with complex domestic issues, blurring public and private, domestic and professional. In the context of super heroics this suggests a "narration of geopolitical crisis as private and domestic" (McPherson 2007: 181), bringing the larger-than-life hero efficiently back home, as it were. At the same time, by introducing spectacular violence into the context of domestic narrative resolution, the contradictions of masculinity and masculine responsibility are foregrounded with heroes constantly – if implicitly – oscillating between savior and threat (Gallagher 2006: 5–6). The famously mutable, emotionally excitable characters of melodrama meanwhile are the antithesis of stoic, masculine heroism.

Such composite narrative appeal, therefore, is not only limited to the programs' textual forms and mixed genre expectations, but also includes the characters that inhabit them. The traditionally gendered appeals of each of these genres, action and melodrama, in other words, would seem to speak to the complex formations informing the performance of masculinity in these programs, marking these heroes as they bear the pressure of simultaneous multiple generic expectations.

Masculinity

Etymologically derived from the same origins, "genre" and "gender" are, after all, both means of organizing complex cultural information into widely accepted categories wherein bodies (of people or of texts) can be

recognized and (at least to some degree) known through expectations of sameness and difference. Masculinity, as a recognizable set of traits facilitating this categorical organization, has always been an unstable signifier. Although it functions as a sign and source of power, agency, and sexuality, masculinity is not an inherent, objective trait, but rather a performative engagement by the subject with culturally and historically specific conditions. Thus masculinity is recognized and defined through the implication of its other. This recognition is therefore troubled when it seems to take on too many characteristics of its other, calling attention to itself as (merely) a performance. The very possibility of misrecognition in turn all too readily suggests that masculinity, although it presents itself otherwise, is ultimately neither natural nor innate, but instead mutable, conditional, and learned. Moreover, the performance of masculinity need not be delimited by the subject's racial, ethnic, sexual, or indeed gender identifications (see Butler 1990; Halberstam 1998; Inness 1999: 85–101). At any given moment, masculinity operates in both the contingent and the plural. As such its status and claims to power are always potentially in crisis.

The action hero on screen in the twentieth century has been an important site of interrogating, rearticulating, and reasserting masculinity as cultural conditions have transformed the meanings of its performances. Television action heroes find their masculinity challenged not only by their growing inhabitation of domestic melodrama and the increasing spectacularization (hence objectification) of their bodies, but by association with their very medium. The time and space of television itself – characterized as mass culture on offer in primarily domestic viewing spaces resulting in attention paid only through the distracted "glance" – has always meant that it has served as a highly contested site of gendered assumptions, with a long history of the domestic medium culturally coded as feminine[5] (Ellis 1982; Huyssen 1986; Modleski 1986).

The programs considered in the following chapters – conceived within and as a response to television in transition – moreover, have also been produced through, circulated, and signified within a cultural context broadly and specifically threatening to the invisible normativity of white masculinity (Robinson 2000: 8). This single era saw the status of traditional white masculinity threatened by multiculturalism, affirmative action, reproductive rights, war trauma, income redistribution, manufacturing decline, radical queer political movements, multiple – sometimes contradictory – forms of feminism, AIDS activism, and more recently methamphetamines, same-sex marriage, and Michelle Obama's arms.

Meanwhile, the signifiers of masculine agency have been complicated by market-research-endorsed erotic objectifications of the male body in magazines, billboards, and screen narratives; by the political influence of reactionary talk radio; and a presidential impeachment stemming from untoward extramarital fellatio. It has been an era, in other words, witnessing both the rise of the "metrosexual" – blending signifiers and presumed cultural practices of both straight and queer into a desirable marketing category (Miller 2005; Simpson 2002) – and the return to a reactionary "red state" white male politics of besieged resentment, angry determination, and despondent anxiety. As a result, Roopali Mukherjee notes, "Its claims to normalcy – the silent hegemony of its centrality – disrupted by epistemic shifts since the civil unrests of the sixties, the category of whiteness, and white masculinity with it, appears to have tumbled toward crisis" (2006: 42).

Thus the heroes of the programs in the following chapters have had to navigate a complex terrain of contradictory masculinities in order to establish their heroic credentials. Given white masculinity's state of perennial crisis, in general this would not be new terrain for such heroes, but now it has been done even while these characters have been called upon precisely for their predictability and reliability in order to circulate globally and hedge against the rapidly transforming conditions of television. These heroes have therefore been produced and circulated in remarkably telling ways, demonstrating the desires at play within the television industry and the conflicting constructions of masculinity at work in the culture. This new generation of heroes has taken on a different relationship to masculinity. Embodying and performing competing masculinities, simultaneously, they form, in essence, composite characters designed to attract various viewing positions together into a (larger) composite audience. Marked in these ways, they are presented as objects as well as subjects, as domestic as well as public and professional, and as mobile not only geographically but also temporally.

The Body of the Hero

These competing politics of masculine performance can be played out on the body of the fictional hero, both relatively safely and dramatically. Safely in that this fictional drama featuring action, violence, and conflict, invites multiple sites of initial engagement and multiple possibilities for disavowal.

It is dramatic in that the hero's body is marked by conflicting appropriations and becomes both a site of exhibition and of graphic, painful injury. So, on the one hand, as Sally Robinson has argued, "White masculinity most fully represents itself as victimized by inhabiting a wounded body, and such a move draws not only on the persuasive force of corporeal pain but also on an identity politics of the dominant" (Robinson 2000: 6). The challenges and threats to the white male body's claim to universal signification are answered by making that very body the site of assault and injury, thus graphically maintaining focus and reasserting its lasting centrality. On the other hand the hero's body is presented as the erotic object of visual pleasure.

There are plentiful examples of the bodily suffering of the white men in the programs this book examines. The premise of *Highlander* involves episodic melees with sharp weapons, resulting in the hero's bodily injury through cuts, stabs, and similar violence as well as the frequent near-avoidance of his decapitation. *Smallville* regularly indulges in the trappings of gothic horror, with rural-based characters, including the hero, trapped, bound, injected, operated upon, and otherwise injured in dungeons, asylums, and poorly lit laboratories on a regular basis. The would-be Superman frequently (if impermanently) loses his invulnerability and so can and does suffer surprising bodily damage as part of the narrative. Jack Bauer, of *24*, meanwhile, requires indulgence in physical and mental masochism in order to identify with his heroics as he encounters exhaustion, bodily injury, graphic torture sequences, and all manner of psychological trauma as well. The Doctor in *Doctor Who* meanwhile, has been forced to regenerate due to grave bodily harm inflicted as a result of his caring too much for Earth and its inhabitants as the last remaining member of his own species.

In each of these programs, a hero who is meant to be like us, only better, negotiates exaggeratedly horrible conflicts, often unbeknown to the rest of the world, and suffers bodily in the process. As in the reactionary imaginary, he is besieged by alien forces (often literally, otherwise figuratively) seeking to usurp his power, harm his loved ones, and destroy his way of life and very existence. He resolves this conflict through violence (usually literal, otherwise figurative), but in the process inhabits a wounded body. In such cases, Robinson argues, "the logic through which the bodily substitutes for the political, and the individual for the social and institutional, reveals that the 'marking' of whiteness and masculinity has already been functioning as a strategy through which white men negotiate the widespread critique of their power and privilege" (Robinson 2000: 6). Such a logic is part of an

on-going "history of modifications to renegotiate the centrality of white power and authority" (Projansky and Ono 1999: 152 quoted in Mukherjee 2006: 43). Besieged by a threatening and uncertain future, they are hurt, they are lost, but it *is* all about *them*, still, if more visibly, at the center.

And yet if each series constructs its hero's body as the site of trauma, with fantastic plots in which their bodies can be literally occupied by others and with all-too-graphic scenes of spectacular injury, torture, and bodily damage preceding the hero's ultimate success, the bodies of these heroes are also clearly here for our viewing pleasure. These programs have all been produced and circulated within a broader cultural moment where objectified, erotic images of the male body have been propagated and increasingly naturalized through provocative advertising, the rise of lad magazines, and new forms of commercial programming, offered to all viewers – male, female, straight, queer – as the site of pleasurable (perhaps narcissistic) desire, fantasy, and aspiration (Bordo 1999). *Highlander*'s hero, played by former dancer and model Adrian Paul, frequently finds occasion to preen. With little narrative alibi, the first season's episode "Band of Brothers," for example, dissolves from a lovemaking scene immediately into one in which he practices choreographed sword-play, alone, shirtless, for the camera. Throughout the series his "quickening" sequences (after defeating an enemy) are self-consciously orgasmic and often occur with his clothing shredded from the preceding swordfight. Similarly, former model Tom Welling's portrayal of a young Clark Kent typically includes narratively gratuitous scenes in which Tom/Clark is caught in torn clothes, soaking wet, and/or in various states of undress. Revealingly posed to the camera, objectified well beyond any narrative necessity or even alibi, recalling Camille Paglia's description of Superman's body as "very phallic, glossy, gleamingly hard-edged, hyper-masculine" (quoted in Kipniss 1994: 150), Clark offers the occasion for what Aaron Taylor has called, in reference to comic books, "the singular fetishism of the hero's body" (Taylor 2007: 354). It is not uncommon for him to be, in such moments, the object of another character's unsubtle gaze. Meanwhile the notoriously sexless Doctor of the BBC's *Doctor Who*, if less frequently unclothed, is now clad in stylish, tight-fitting ensembles, the object of approvingly flirty remarks by clearly admiring traveling companions (so far including female, male, human and alien). *24*'s Jack Bauer (played by Keifer Sutherland, initially against type), is perhaps less overtly sexually objectified, although his body is treated to a series of sado-masochistically themed narrative developments for our viewing while remaining consistently the lone site of reliable narrative action.

Steve Neale noted some time ago that even with the presumption of a heterosexual, male "mainstream" audience, "the male image can involve an eroticism, since there is always a constant oscillation between that image as a source of identification, and as an other, a source of contemplation" (1993: 13). Therefore, he continued, "it is not surprising either that 'male' genres . . . constantly involve sado-masochistic themes, scenes, and phantasies or that male heroes can at times be marked as the object of an erotic gaze" (1999: 13). For Neale, at the time of his writing, the typical assumption informing these moments was that they would be accompanied by some form of textual or narrative alibi for the eroticization of the male body, so that the male body was not marked explicitly as the erotic object of another male's look (1999: 14): the hero's shirt is off, not to exhibit his body, but because it was shredded in closely matched combat; Superman wears body-tights not to show off his physique, but because he is a superhero from another planet; etc. Immersed in psychoanalytic jargon, Neale nonetheless usefully refers to these narrative alibis as moments of "disavowal" when the viewer can claim legitimate textual reasons for gazing upon the male body without admitting any pleasure in it of itself. Such moments of disavowal, however, appear increasingly unconvincing (even half-hearted or perhaps winking) in the context of explicit discourses of male sexuality and objectification at the end of the twentieth century. In fact they seem to disappear almost completely at times from programs like *Highlander* and *Smallville* where narratively little seems to motivate certain scenes of erotic objectification of the hero.[6] In narrative terms, such moments tend to bring the storytelling to an explicit halt so that we can gape. At such moments the hero is objectified, losing his claim to motivate the action of the narrative through masculine agency.

Indeed both the graphic bodily injury and the erotic display of the heroes' bodies would seem to undermine the masculine subjectivity of these heroes. In each case the body of the hero is objectified and appropriated for other uses (to signify and spectacularize white masculine victimization or to please the viewing subject). Textually it is clear that the hero does not initiate nor control these situations, undermining the authority of his masculinity.

This is certainly one way to read the active fascination with coupling these heroes in same-sex pairings in "slash" fiction[7] produced by fans of the programs. Constance Penley demonstrated nearly 20 years ago that the impulse (at least at that time, among *Star Trek* fans) was not pornographic but rather radically egalitarian. In her investigation, the

production of these stories, mostly by straight-identified middle income, middle aged women, offered narrative space where unequal power relations between genders could be circumvented by erasing gender difference within the narrative world (Penley 1992). To the extent that this is still the case, it nevertheless furthers the notion that the hero's traditional markers of masculine identity are threatened as he is narratively appropriated, beyond his control, for purposes quite at odds with the assertion of his masculine superiority. Slash fiction has since become more plentiful, more readily accessed and exchanged, and apparently more acceptable (at least marginally, both culturally and to copyright holders) in large part because of the capacity of the internet to both seemingly effortlessly and limitlessly distribute such writing and provide ease of access to communities of shared affinity. Thus even a superficial search through a commercial internet search engine readily produces slash fiction featuring MacLeod/Methos (*Highlander*), Clark/Lex (*Smallville*), Jack/Tony (*24*), and the Doctor/Master[8] (*Doctor Who*) pairings.

Fans of these series, however, go further, employing detailed exegesis to seek out textual (and extra-textual) evidence that such relations are "really" going on in the program's source text as well. That such efforts by the slash fandom community appear to reap the sought-after evidence speaks not only to the exceptional reading practices of dedicated fans but also to the textual strategies of the programs (Stein 2005). Indeed more than one observer has noted the apparent introduction of "subtext" inserted into the program's narrative encouraging "fannish" appropriation[9] (Jones 2006). Even without the inclination to produce slash fiction, fans of these series, academic and otherwise, seem to recognize a different relationship to the heroes' masculinity. Women's Studies professor Katie King revealed, for example, about watching *Highlander*:

> My own pleasure in *Highlander* began with the principal actor Adrian Paul's eroticized image. I immediately (and apparently somewhat idiosyncratically) "recognized" it as gay (the image, not necessarily the story character Duncan MacLeod, or the actor Adrian Paul) (King 2002: 102).

Such readings are evidence that the representation of masculinity in these programs is readily, perhaps even eagerly, open to a variety of interpretations.[10] As these characters have been asked to travel through multiple new genres, following institutional prerogatives, traditional markers of masculinity have come under threat.

The objectification and eroticization of these heroes is pronounced and apparent enough that their masculinity, indeed, is open to interpretation in readings much more casual and banal than the exceptional efforts of dedicated fans and/or trained scholars. Those looking for such textual clues are rewarded while presumably those not interested are not distracted. Yet, while facing cultural and textual threats to their claims of universal signification, these heroes still very much represent normative white masculinity. Each of these heroes evinces plentiful masculine heroic traits such as rough physicality, short patience for bureaucratic impediments, detailed knowledge of obscure subjects, and easy aptitude with weapons and technology. Such traits allow for performances of masculinity even while the hero attends to his appearance and finds himself the object of another's gaze (Gallagher 2006: 10). Here again, textual strategies for drawing together a composite audience hinge on composite reconsiderations of genre, narrative and the hero's masculinity, none of which escape unchanged, unscarred.

This is how such programming continues to make claims to a "mainstream" audience despite that audience's fragmentation across new channels and new technologies. While the mainstream audience may no longer be presumed to be from within the undifferentiated mass of television viewers, it can be assembled from the fruits of multiple, simultaneous pursuits. Multiple, specific textual strategies of address take precedence over merely expansive distribution in order to assemble an audience that is in the composite, "mainstream." Indeed each of these programs has drawn audiences roughly equally split between genders, for example (at least upon initial airing, the composition of enduring fandom may be another matter). The significant female audience might presumably be surprising for violent, male-centered action narratives. The significant male audience might be surprising for eroticized male imagery within domestic melodrama. These audiences are perhaps less surprising for programs constituted as both, at the same time. Indeed, for those viewers unlikely to admit pleasure in the other, these multiple modes of address offer a ready disavowal, with the explanation that certain appeals are clearly intended for other viewers (Mackinnon 1999).

Mobility

Each of these four action hero characters therefore also evinces a complex negotiation of genre, media, space, and time. This necessarily heightened

mobility is a function of the new contexts in which these heroes have been placed and is perhaps most revealing in each character's relationship to time. Time for these characters is an ever present, ultimately omnipotent force and yet it is not experienced in the context of these programs as insurmountable. Temporal travel becomes as significant and multitudinous (and visually and narratively exhilarating) as spatial travel has always been for the action genre. Moreover, it is not presented as (or at least not only as) linear. The overwhelming relationship these characters maintain toward temporality is one of mobility. These action heroes are highly mobile, traversing now not only spatial and geographical distances in dazzlingly kinetic ways, but also temporal distance as a part of their heroic actions.

While the pounding clock in *24* constantly reminds of time's inescapability (particularly salient given Jack's constant mixing of private and professional time), the famous split-screen technique argues for the role of simultaneity rather than sheer narrative linearity. Duncan MacLeod's immortality offers a means of surmounting the limits of time even as his constant flashbacks over 400 years of personal and also world-historic events extinguishes the linear progression of time. Clark Kent's increasingly improbable extension of his adolescence into adulthood (thus deferring the time of his Superman identity) is countered by a temporality shrunk by his super speed, reducing spatial travel to three rather than four dimensions. The Doctor's status as a regenerating (and thus functionally immortal) Time Lord and operator of a time machine places him in a completely mobile relationship to temporality. As with the programs in which they feature, these characters are defined, through their identity and masculinity, by their high degree of spatial and also temporal mobility.

This suggests new narrative strategies and metaphors for overcoming the limits of masculinity through fantasies of transcendence. Drawing on a narrative tradition in which the limits of masculinity are overcome through expansion into new, external spaces and territories (see discussion of Donald Greiner in Jeffords 1993: esp. 259–61), these new heroes seek to negotiate temporality itself. Where once Josie Wales could overcome domestic destruction and death by traveling to new, western spaces or Douglas Fairbanks could transform from mollycoddle to kinetic masculine hero simply by traveling west (Studlar 1996: 10–89), these new characters find temporal mobility perhaps even more crucial. Each of these heroes has found ways to overcome limits and embody heroics not by expanding into external territories and greater space, but by circumventing the scarcity of

time (through immortality, invulnerability, or spectacular mobility) only to encounter the limits of space through interminable wandering.

Transcendent Nostalgia

At the same time, each of these programs, with their novel and explicit insertion of heroes into complex temporal and spatial regimes of mobility, registers a nostalgic undertone. Like the later-era western films that Steve Neale considered, so too are these programs "shot through with nostalgia, with an obsession with images and definitions of masculinity and masculine codes of behaviour, and with images of male narcissism and the threats posed to it by women, society, and the law" even as these threats represent the very terrain against which the heroes' masculinity is defined and for which they are responsible (Neale 1993: 15). Under siege, with an uncertain future, this is what marks these particular programs as exemplary of their historical as well as institutional conditions. These shows have been produced and circulate in a cultural moment when yet again the norms of masculinity are being refined. Unfettered travel, immortality, on-going crises, the blurring of the personal and the professional, and erotic objectification are the causes and conditions of a powerful but wearying new masculine norm. The threats to masculine hegemony and to presumptions of universal signification are overcome through spectacular mobility in the new time and space of television.

While these characters suffer bodily injury in some episodes, they suffer serially from a sense of interminable loss and sadness arising essentially and quite simply from their continued existence: Duncan's immortality means he outlives everyone he's ever loved, he cannot reproduce, and must ritually kill to survive; Clark's indestructibility and super powers mean that he and his loved ones for whom he feels responsibility will forever be the targets of villainy; Jack's increasingly unlikely and grotesque survival is racked with guilt over those he's known and cared about who have not survived (nearly everyone); the Doctor's near-immortality only extends his guilt and loneliness as the last of his kind. Although spoken by the Doctor, each of these characters might have said "You can spend the rest of your life with me. But I can't spend the rest of mine with you. I have to live on – alone." ("School Reunion"). Such is the tragic grandeur of these heroes and their temporal transcendence. But it seems as well to speak complexly for and through their masculinity, forever rehearsing a stoicism that

returns very little. And again it may well speak for the hero of such programming amid an industry unsure of its future and losing its audience. Looking forward by looking back, these representations of masculinity offer composite portraits intended for a composite (rather than mass) audience.

White male agency in these programs is visualized through motifs of spatial and temporal mobility allowing these heroes to transcend the limits of their identity and maintain their agency, authority, and power. In each case, however, the fantastic plentitude of this spatio-temporal transcendence is clearly presented as a limit case, suggesting that something has already been sacrificed in order to achieve it. To transcend spatial and temporal limits of any sort produces in each of these characters a dislocation, where they are never truly at home, never not in crisis, and ultimately unable to stop their mobility, now the very condition of their masculine agency.

Considering these are supposed to be our heroes, the narratives of these programs dwell on the pathos and alienation (literal and figurative) we are asked to feel along with them. Their plentitude, powers, and beauty are tempered by their troubles, desires, fears, and identities; the tragedy of being super. Discussing the strange split between Superman and Clark Kent, for example, Thomas Andrae's observation might ultimately apply just as well to any of these four characters: "His feeling of power is based upon the renunciation of all pleasure, sexuality, and emotional involvement" (Andrae 1980: 104). This is at best an impoverished performance of masculinity. The traps of masculine identity, negotiating between the publicly heroic and the privately fulfilled, are continuously (that is, serially) unresolved as a fact and effect of the mobility that constitutes and sustains that masculinity.

These characters' stories are ultimately stories about struggles with negotiating identity. Within these new and shifting spatial and temporal relations, this world without borders (for some), these heroes are struggling (albeit spectacularly) with what it means to be a citizen, a man, a hero. Each of these heroes is seeking a new form of masculine performance that he cannot yet quite imagine: transnational; attenuated; temporal; regenerative. These narratives are, in turn, related through an industry that itself finds its hegemony threatened and is restructuring its practices from a focus on temporal control and spatial reach to an attempt to gather a fragmenting audience through both spatial and temporal mobility.

CHAPTER 3

How to Watch Television

This chapter provides a framework for understanding the chapters that follow, each of which centers on the close examination of a single television series, within the context of the chapters that have preceded it. It does this by offering three distinct (but not unrelated) practices for viewing television in transition and these programs in particular. The first strategy accounts for industry practices put into place (if at times haphazardly, at others reluctantly) to stem the fragmentation and migration of audiences. These practices represent the acquiescence to the rapidly changing viewing protocols across developing platforms of delivery that have encouraged this migration (with the hope to reassert television's relevance within them). The second strategy suggests methods and a framework for understanding television as both industry and narrative site, both commodity and text, simultaneously. The third strategy proposes what might be at stake in terms of the identities we inhabit, imagine, and encounter as we watch television. These sections are therefore subtitled, Where to Watch, How to Watch, and What it Means.

Where to Watch

The multiplying channels, platforms, and technologies that have characterized this era of television in transition have impacted television narrative. Increased competition for audiences has, for example, put new purchase on novel, particularly visually striking, forms of address in television programming. The fragmentation of the once supposed national family audience coupled with the increasingly accessible possibility of repeat or undistracted viewing (e.g. via DVD, DVR, or on-demand) has led to some programming designed to cultivate such viewing practices to

form an idealized, upscale, advertiser-friendly, tech-savvy demographic drawn in by and loyal to long-form, serial, narratively sophisticated storytelling. This period has witnessed the rise of lavishly produced, multi-character narrative dramas featuring characters whose actions are motivated by deep and complex syntheses of psychology and biography, revealed piecemeal over the course of several seasons (frequently cited examples include *The X-Files*, *Northern Exposure*, *Homicide: Life on the Street*, *The West Wing*, *Lost, The Sopranos*, *The Wire*, and *Battlestar Galactica*).

Seeking out different fragments of different audiences in a variety of locations, this era has also seen the dramatic rise in creative promotional tie-ins. Mobile phone service providers have regularly struck deals with television producers so that text messages, ring-tone music, and specifically-produced, brief "mobisodes," all textually and/or extra-textually interlinked with a television series might be made available to viewers of the program who are also subscribers to the mobile service. Similarly, websites have proliferated as a means of reminding audiences – especially the coveted younger, upscale, tech-equipped demographics – that television offerings might appeal to them. In fact, this appeal is meant to be amplified through interactive web designs encouraging the investment of both time and affect in exploring minutiae related to either the production or the diegesis (or both) of a specific program. Rare now is the television program that does not have its associated website, offering trivia, plot summaries, interviews, behind-the-scenes glimpses, and scheduling information. Starting around the turn of the twenty-first century, these websites became increasingly creative, attempting to further the users' experience of the primary program's diegetic world. Fictional newspapers from the characters' hometown, diaries and blogs ostensibly generated by main characters, fictional business and school websites, and other accessible, interactive offerings from within the narrative world of the program became regular encounters for curious fans of these programs. As higher speed broadband access to the internet has become increasingly available to the most desirable demographics, the internet designs associated with television networks and individual programs have expanded to include interactive, visually compelling games, animated and even live-action short videos in the form of outtakes or (unions and guilds permitting – or notwithstanding) actual supplementary narrative material. These videos might be edited montage packages of what has happened recently in the main narrative of the program. They might also be previews of what will happen or parallel narratives, expanding on asides or background

happenings in the television program. More recently it has become increasingly common to find entire, recent episodes available for (re) viewing. These strategies have proven to be a significant, mutually reinforcing (TV/new media; programming/sponsors) promotional strategy for television programming amid changing technological and media platforms.

This expansion into "new media" realms by television production has, in other words, gradually resulted in the potential viewing experience of a given program being intentionally designed to be experienced in multiple possible ways, spread out from its primary television text. A program's overarching narrative can be understood as dispersed across different media platforms. Narrative material, showing snippets of backstory, the exploits of minor characters, video diaries of recurring characters, and other narrative enhancements are typically perhaps acknowledged within the primary, television text, but not crucial to understanding it as a singular experience. Collectively, these multi-platform, multi-technological expansions of the experience of a program fall under institutional practices known as media "convergence." They arise from initial television industry efforts to prepare for a world in which many consumer electronics (including television and personal computers) would converge into a single technology. Soon the television industry found the more relevant practice was in undertaking these strategies in order to bolster efforts at getting fragmenting audiences to converge at the site of their branded intellectual property.

Initially such utilization of technological convergence (encountering television worlds on one's home computer or mobile device) were used to market television programs to precisely those audience segments thought most likely to be surfing the web rather than watching television, attempting to make certain television programs seem more relevant to the platform-promiscuous audience demographics. Young affluent audiences were wooed through intricate, often very creative websites designed to make television programming aimed at them seem relevant and a natural part of their media world (Brooker 2001). Increasingly, some programming was designed, written, or at least included moments meant to reward viewers who discovered or sought out additional narrative experiences beyond the weekly episodic television airing.

The programs in the chapters that follow have indeed been actively involved in the propagation of and promotion by such various versions of convergence. Behind the camera, each of these programs, among other things, experimented with new paths for television programming both

while in production and on the air and also as a carefully planned afterlife meant to extend the narrative and the brand value productively and profitably into the future. These strategies for the (spatial) narrative dispersal and (temporal) afterlife of programming impact not only the institutional relations behind the camera (emphasizing branding, influencing decisions about what gets cancelled and when, divvying up shares of future sales), but also the semiotics of programming now designed for broadcast television as only the first stop in a continuing narrative experience.

The show *24*, although aimed at a more traditional network audience (i.e. a bit broader, a bit older), was among the first programs to offer "mobisodes" for mobile phone users, first featuring the exploits of essentially background characters (i.e. extras on the primary show) and later remixed adventures of central character Jack Bauer. *24* was also the first network drama to be offered in a DVD box set of an entire season while still in first-run production (see Chapter 6). *Smallville*, building on web promotions practiced over several years on the younger-skewing WB network (with innovative websites for teens watching, for example, *Dawson's Creek*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, and *Popular*) offered a significant web presence even prior its premiere. Before the series' national debut on the WB, when one episode had aired in only a few test markets, the network's website already linked to a number of *Smallville* fan sites and invited participation in a discussion forum (Gordon 2003: 157). This online presence was soon enhanced by websites for the (fictional) Smallville High School student paper, *The Torch*, and the Smallville town paper, *The Ledger*, as well as billionaire industrial scion Lex Luthor's company website for Luthorcorp (with the possibility of obtaining personal information about him and his plans for particularly enterprising web surfers). Allison Mack, who plays Clark Kent's friend Chloe Sullivan, was commissioned to keep a personal blog (Jones 2006). Later seasons saw webisodes and mobisodes featuring animated adventures of secondary superhero characters (Supergirl, Green Arrow, Flash, etc.) and regularly scheduled text message trivia updates. As programs like *Smallville* have expanded their diegetic presence beyond a single medium, their success in these realms might also be measured by unintended consequences. While *Smallville* is now the longest running comic-book based television series in history, with the most screen time of any iteration of Superman, its success means that it has also consistently ranked in the top 10 of programs illicitly downloaded through online peer-to-peer file sharing protocols like

BitTorrent (see Atkinson 2005; Fritz 2006; Ghandour 2006; Pirates Ahoy! 2006). It has also been, reportedly, a favorite pirated DVD in Uganda.[1] This heightened profile, meanwhile, means that it also remains mired in legal action taken by Jerry Siegel's widow and daughter over ownership of and rights to the intellectual property of "Superboy" (Cieply 2008).

Doctor Who was (re)launched amid avid calls for the BBC to follow similar multi-platform convergence strategies as part of its service to the public who underwrites its financing. Mark Thompson, the BBC's Director General, suggested "It will be much harder to justify very high budgets for content that only gets a single outing on a linear channel. But that's no longer the right way to think about content commissioning" (quoted in Perryman 2008: 22). So far as the public service broadcaster was concerned, television in transition has made cross-platform, global distribution imperative, under the banner of viewer sovereignty and market "choice." Michael Grade, then Chairman of the BBC, spoke to the National Association of Television Programme Executives about "Fear and the Future" in 2006, suggesting that "the on-demand world will be one of infinite global choice" (quoted in Perryman 2008: 21). So it comes as little surprise that the new *Doctor Who* has therefore drawn on techniques established in the afterlife of the original series as well as additional, developing practices of convergence. These have so far included video blogs, mobisodes, podcast commentaries, interactive internet adventures, and metatextual websites in addition to two television spin-offs and other more Luddite-friendly forms of marketing and merchandising (Perryman 2008). Even the illicit distribution of the pilot episode on the internet prior to its debut was widely interpreted to be part of a covert, viral marketing campaign.

Highlander, meanwhile, airing prior to the ascendancy of television's internet co-presence, nonetheless maintained an impressive range of relatively innovative marketing and brand-expanding practices, extending its narrative world beyond the television episodes aired. An official website offered prop replicas, clothing, and videos of episodes. As showrunner David Abramowitz recalls, "At the time, no one really believed that someone would buy videotapes or DVD's of a show that they could watch on television for free. No one believed it." That is, except for the series' executive producers and property holders, Peter Davis and Bill Panzer (D. Abramowitz, personal communication). Thus a decade after the shooting of the last episodes, the program continues in official and

fan-produced websites, the commissioning of feature films, the licensing of comic books, ''animatrix-like'' animated shorts available on DVD and internet, multiple video games, and other brand extensions, making the show, in Abramowitz's (admittedly not disinterested) estimation, a standard bearer in this form of narrative extension and trans-media presence.

In each of these cases, the effort was initially to leverage new technologies and platforms in the service of further promoting the television program (and perhaps its broadcasters, and increasingly its sponsors). Viewers who would spend time not only watching the program when it airs, but watching it again on other platforms and seeking out further experiences would be spending time with and presumably generating loyalty to the branded property with the television program at its center. Second, these efforts amounted to the tacit acquiescence of television to newer media forms in a process of on-going ''convergence.''

While casual viewers were not meant to be impeded from simply watching television as they presumably always had, from the avid viewer's point of view this cross-platform convergence altered, potentially significantly, the possibilities of narrative engagement with such programming. As television program narratives have attempted to follow their audiences (through space and time) by dispersing across multiple platforms (accessed at the user's discretion rather than on the network's schedule), new aesthetics have emerged meant to capitalize on these options for viewer engagement. These have been broadly theorized in a process Henry Jenkins has termed ''transmedia storytelling.'' As Jenkins explains, ''a transmedia story unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole'' (Jenkins 2006: 95–6). Each contribution tends to be self-contained so that consumers can make sense of it without necessary reference to another contribution, but each should also contribute something unique to the overall transmedia experience. As Jenkins observes, from an institutional vantage, ''reading across the media sustains a depth of experience that motivates more consumption'' and serves the interests of intellectual property holders by ''offering new levels of insight and experience [that] refreshes the franchise and sustains consumer loyalty'' (Jenkins 2006: 96). Such a strategy not only acknowledges and leverages the expansion of media platforms during this period of television in transition, but does so in ways that utilize the horizontal integration of vast media conglomerates, encouraging audiences to flow through television to internet

portals, paper publications, video game franchises, etc., each owned or sponsored by the same corporate entity.

For Jenkins the practice of transmedia storytelling offers opportunities for collaborative cultural production and experiments in elaborate "world building" practices for cultural producers. Experts in the production of narrative in one medium must coordinate and collaborate with those in other areas if the audience experience is to be fully integrated as smooth and consistent. Such integration, in turn, encourages and even rewards engaged, active viewers who seek out expanded narrative experiences by engaging with multiple media sources, resulting in a "richer entertainment experience" (Jenkins 2006: 21) associated with the branded intellectual property of a corporate media entity. This richer experience is clearly to the benefit of greater revenue generation for the intellectual property holders (if not necessarily their labor force).

For audiences, television viewing in this scenario is no longer associated with the supposedly passive "glance" of domestic reception and temporally scarce programs (see Ellis 1982). Instead, as the television industry finds its spatial expansion geographically saturated, it has turned to competing for market share across other borders. As technology and deregulation work to circumvent temporal scarcity, the response has been a ubiquity of distribution of branded intellectual property across multiple media. As viewers pursue or encounter this programming in various media, their activity has been recoded as (inter)active, altering class and gendered assumptions about the medium. Thus the richer entertainment experience comes overdetermined by ideological constructions of what constitutes the act of active viewing. William Boddy, for example, reminds us that since the start of this period of convergence in television's transition, the introduction of new consumer electronics and technological change to the television apparatus has been explicitly couched in "discussion addressing the entire spectrum of electronic high tech [which] was inflected with the rhetorical project of remasculinizing the television apparatus through fantasies of power and control" (Boddy 2004: 72).[2] Apparently no longer the passive recipient of limited programming (acting only after the fact), the viewer has been transformed, by the new protocols of viewing itself, into an active agent. These efforts to recode the cultural practice of television viewing (and by extension, the television viewer) occur amid a transforming understanding of the time and space of television. The spatial metaphors through which new media have long been articulated (cyber*space*, information highway, windows, etc.) belie

the temporal control many provide to the consumer (time shifting, simultaneous viewing, etc.). The thrills found by hunting and gathering narrative pieces over time and across multiple media – clicking on websites delivered through broadband, while rewatching episodes on DVD on the plasma screen, while checking for text messages and mobisodes on the video-capable phone – not only speaks to the affluence of the intended audience but plays off of a desire for power and control over real and simulated spatial and temporal mobility that is precisely leveraged by the very arrangement of the media textual material being offered. Such consumer fantasies are designed to reproduce the kind of gendered (masculine) agency so many of the narratives available seem to be calling into question.

Moreover, as texts are dispersed over multiple platforms they also travel across national, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural borders. These practices not only refigure the fiscal, but also the semiotic value of the programming as it travels. What of the transnational storytelling that is pieced together from these travels? And what kind of textual and narrative designs are incorporated into the fabric of programming intended to be multimedia and multinational (as are the media conglomerates that produce it)? Whose mastery, whose control, and whose fantasies (masculinist or otherwise) are at play in these forms of circulation? These questions are not to discount the creative processes involved in successful transmedia storytelling, the cultural transformations they may foreground and encourage (collective intelligence, communities of affinity, etc.), nor the very real pleasures involved in the experience of encountering these narratives (or even of achieving a sense of masculine control, regardless of gender). Meanings derived from these changing conditions are not to be discounted either. This process of interaction with these narratives, as Jenkins argues, can encourage the possibility of collectively derived meanings (echoing in some ways the participation and deliberation coveted by political theorists of the public sphere).[3]

These questions do, however, acknowledge the institutional parameters and the commodity status of these narratives and the means of accessing them, including the barriers to participation in the process of transmedia storytelling or viewing. Moreover, these new practices remain cultural practices, arriving within history, imbricated in ideologies and assumptions about gendered, generational, classed, raced, and national meanings and significance within and through these very practices and promises of interactivity, creativity, agency and control.

To be sure, as cultural practices, their value and their trajectories are intimately interlinked. Charles Acland has suggested that "secondary" markets – which in the case of commercial broadcast television includes everything beyond the initial airing of an episode – alter both the commercial and semiotic value of a cultural product (2007: xv). But neither of these values is altered in entirely predictable ways. As the "property" of programming is distributed into ubiquity, there is ample evidence that television programs increasingly live on even beyond (even against) the circulation that has been institutionally scripted for them. The same activities and options that motivate television convergence practices, the circumvention of temporal scarcity and the fragmentation of the audience, are also the cause and the result of the remarkable growth in fan activities, audience activism, and the expanding utilization of digital video (and home post-production tools). All are ways and means for people to use and make meaning from television far beyond the scripts produced by the television industry and thus experience new forms of convergence and yet another kind of afterlife for programs. Television now more than ever requires specific strategies for viewing if we are to understand and adequately engage with all that we see.

How to Watch

The practice of watching television is therefore also in transition. It is now increasingly characterized in aggrandizing marketing terms that attempt to mark it as active, creative and masculine. It involves a multitude of technologies, choices, and abundance. It is certainly now imbued with more overtly diverse forms of spatial and temporal mobility. If the introduction of television viewing as a domestic media practice was characterized, in Raymond Williams' term, by a cultural turn toward "mobile privatization" (1974), that mobility was largely virtual so far as television viewing was concerned. The television was a large, heavy piece of furniture that brought distant signals into one's (home) viewing space. It featured programming that, while emanating from far away, was temporally restricted and scarce. Television viewing in the twenty-first century, in comparison, is characterized by both virtual and actual mobility. This is a mobility across platforms (from television to mobile phone to computer screen to minivan). It is a mobility *of* the screen, with iPods and portable DVD players and smartphones making the location of viewing transient.

It can be a mobility across media as narratives are continued (rather than simply re-available) across these various platforms. It is a mobility across nations, with programs and formats accruing new geographic sites for exhibition and translation. It is also a temporal mobility as time-shifting technologies from VCRs to flashdrives allow for temporal control on the viewer's rather than the network's part (that is, once the program episode has been "released" by the network). In many ways television is immersive, whether because it is ubiquitous, interactive, atemporal, or all three.

These multiple levels of spatial and temporal mobility have resulted from economic, technological and institutional changes in the television industry and have, in turn, altered the experience and the meaning of television for the viewer, asking for new and different forms of attention to be paid to television's programming. Indeed television programming is increasingly designed around the idea of investment. Intellectual property holders and distributors consider their programming properties to be investments and therefore constantly seek out new ways to maximize their returns, grow the value, and extend the life of these investments. As a result they have created a growing number of ways for viewers of their programming to invest as well. Through sophisticated narratives, episodic-serial form, wide distribution, interactive technologies, brand identity, etc., viewers are given means and (perhaps) motive to *invest*: emotion; effort; and time.

For the student of television, the logic of such investment can offer a strategy for viewing television in transition (if not taken too literally). Investment implies a spatiotemporal, plural relationship to its object, after all, as *investors* seek a *return* on their investment in the *future*. At its simplest, investment requires we find something *in which* to invest, apprehend it *over time*, and account for the activity of *others*. Translated into a formula for how to watch television, this logic would recommend a similar strategy: Watch in space; in time; and in common.

To watch in the space of television is to address the implications not simply of what to watch, but also of where to watch. It involves watching television not only on television, but also across the multiple media through which it is now offered, understanding the multiple sites and global destinations of what plays on various screens. It also means considering the implications for form, style, narrative meaning, and signification this spatial mobility entails. To watch in space means watching a program carefully, reading it closely as a textual form (even though now disseminated across a multiplicity of viewing and institutional engagements).

To watch in time is to consider a program's afterlife. It means tracking a program's serial progression, considering the narrative and character developments and their changing meanings over time. It means noting transforming significations and various deployments of the program's "brand identity." It means watching the program again – rewound, repeated, repackaged, repurposed, or reinvented – even (especially) after it has initially ended. Television can increasingly be watched at any time, in any order, "live" or dead-cancelled. The very threats to the future of television, leading to so much discussion of post-television, are comprised to a surprising degree of television's past! Such time-shifting options reflect new considerations of temporality for a medium traditionally obsessed with time, from carefully planned programming schedules, to rigorously maintained time-slots, to an ideology of liveness, and until recently, including the supposition of essential simultaneity and ephemerality. To watch in time also means watching not only the televisual text, but also its metatexts: industry and trade discourse; producer and marketing rhetoric; critical uptake and fan commentary; and cultural referencing in all the permutations they take over time.

To watch in common is to attend to television's intersubjective viewing practices. It is to watch the program intertextually, noting how it both draws on and offers up meaning in complicated relation to other cultural texts. It is also to watch in conversation – direct and variously mediated – with other viewers. It is to consider the working out of meaning through dialogic and deliberative means within a community of shared affinity. These communities are more readily formed, more frequently in contact even while more geographically dispersed thanks to new communication technologies. They are more eagerly encouraged, cultivated, and mined for preferences and insights by the television industry because they are both easier to find (search the internet) and already active in the new media through which television programming is now disseminated. While intersubjective engagement with television is not new, new media have increased its visibility, (arguably) its scale, and its (at least institutional) influence. To watch television in common is also to take the common(s) seriously. The shared experience and deliberation of the narrative, characters, plots, representations and repercussions combined with the growing ubiquity (spatially and temporally) of television programs means that despite the efforts of copyright and trademark enforcement policies, viewers hold these stories and characters in common. Here the investment in television comes full circle, with the

commons (so far implicitly) claiming rights and a shared ownership in the programming. Television programming is commonly referenced – from video excerpts to fan fiction to lifestyle choices to daily conversations. It gets reused, reimagined, rejigged, and regularly embraced to communicate, entertain, and produce a variety of meanings in excess of and beyond the control of any original intention. To watch in common is to both communicate about and also, crucially, *with* these programs.

Together, these three *ins* offer a strategy for how to watch television. Such a strategy helps us understand how innovation takes place within as well as in excess of the television industry's management of predictability and risk; repetition, innovation, and flow. Significantly, none of these approaches stands on its own as sufficient in understanding the television program, but each constitutes a part of the whole, integrated practice of watching.

An investment strategy encompassing these three approaches to television is not so very novel or difficult. Television viewers get into television viewing through precisely a version of these *ins* every day. Evidence for this is readily available on websites and discussion boards. Blogs and tweets and social networking sites are filled with responses, interpretations, and analyses of television programming that consider not only textual, formal, stylistic, and narrative aspects of television programming, but also cultural practices, global circulation and local reception, and institutional and political economic conditions, as part of viewers' investment and attention to television. Such approaches are not the product or condition of the internet, however, in that the same accounting of multiple factors can regularly be heard in ad hoc daily discussions over the cubicle divider and date back at least as far as the water cooler. Representations of gender, race, and ethnicity are considered alongside the physical appearance of actors and the narrative "arc" of characters. *Entertainment Weekly*, *Entertainment Tonight*, the E! Channel, and multiple websites offer behind-the-scenes production and programming information to even casually interested television viewers, who know about overnight ratings, labor disputes, and the personal indiscretions of actors and directors. Even if the specifics are unclear, narrative misfires are nevertheless readily attributed to TPTB (The Powers That Be), a ubiquitous force informing armchair (or sofa) television analysis and viewer discussions. Watching television, therefore, regularly (if not inevitably) entails the spatial, the temporal, and the common.

Considering these three approaches, simultaneously, offers a route for navigating the institutional and the textual aspects of television that is not simply reliant upon the media and technology proffered by the television and electronics industries. It urges a consideration of what programming means as it comes upon us while watching the screen *and* the path taken to be able to come upon us in the first place. It treats programming as the site of both fact and interpretation. It means apprehending the text precisely at the point where economic structures and structures of meaning encounter one another. The following chapters track significant moments in the biography (and afterlife) of distinct television programs, treating these commodity signs – their spatial and temporal travel as well as their common significations – through a conjunctural practice of analysis, allying socioeconomic with narrative and representational approaches (Murdoch 1995; Miller 2006, 2008). This is not to argue for simple reflectionism, where the narrative invariably mirrors the conditions of its production, but does acknowledge that as products of a robust and professional culture industry, these programs have inarguably taken form in the context of certain changing conditions and as a result of specific (if perhaps overdetermined) decisions. Therefore, it is impossible to watch or "read" them without fully acknowledging their conditions of production, circulation, and reception. Watching television through such a conjunctural analysis is not simply to argue for the relative importance of various, separate critical stances either, but to understand ways in which these stances inflect and inform one another, producing a different understanding of the program, its circulation, and meaning.

What it Means

Such a practice of watching television, understanding it as an intersection of economics and meaning in time, in space, and in common, asks us also to consider the role of identity in relation to our experience of the medium. Inhabiting a particular identity as part of the economic and semiotic practices of media propels us into considerations of cultural citizenship. The cultural citizenship most associated with television has traditionally been intricately linked with corresponding national citizenships (Hartley 1992). Television in transition, however, implies new relations to the occupation of cultural citizenry premised on the transcendence of borders and a mobility regarding both space and time. As audiences disperse,

television asks us to engage with it by traversing technological and platform borders, overcoming narrative and generic borders, reconsidering national borders, ultimately disregarding the spatial, and now, with the growth of time-shifting technologies and the increasingly elaborately planned afterlife of television, temporal borders as well. As the imagined national family of television viewers has fragmented, television programming is increasingly desperate to gather us together once again into a big, happy audience and so it is increasingly clever at flattering us with the possibility of inhabiting a newly imagined, transcendent cultural citizenship. This imagined relationship with television programming, so encouraged by textual, institutional, and promotional practices of the industry, seeks both spatial and temporal borderless, infinite, unfettered travel.

To imagine this borderless existence is as simple as imagining the life of the contemporary cosmopolitan. Cosmopolitanism is nothing, after all, if not an aggrandized transcendence of borders. As such it is the perfect metaphor for a television industry in transition, imagining its own programming and encouraging its dispersed audience to do away with the constraints of borders. While cosmopolitanism has always been about the transcendence of spatial borders, television is one of several technologies encouraging it to consider the transcendence of time as well. From crisis coverage to sitcoms, the history of the medium has always been newly available, if repackaged and rerun, for current viewing.[4] Television in transition has come to exaggerate this practice, diminishing the scarcity of these temporal windows and relying on temporal transcendence to overcome its encounters with the limits of space. On television immortality seems the rule rather than the exception. By never dying while always traveling, accruing additional value through stops in ever new locations, immortality may be our television age's contribution to the continuing fantasy of a cosmopolitan way of being in the world.

Cosmopolitanism has much to offer television in return. As both a model for its properties and a fantasy for its viewers, television programming embraces the idea of the global citizen, "unbounded, unobstructed, and unlocated".[5] Readily negotiating the technologies of globalization and eagerly accommodated within a variety of localities, cosmopolitanism has, within the context of cultural and economic globalization, re-engaged the popular imaginary.[6] Cosmopolitanism, furthermore, is aspirational. It is aspired to in the realm of human justice where its appeal and transcendence offer to structure just or egalitarian post-state ethics (Benhabib 2006).[7] It is also aspired to in the realm of personal privilege, where living

in a world without borders, comfortably at home in every locality, free to indulge, without ties, in the challenges and the riches of all the world's lands, remains a constantly renewable fantasy.

A cosmopolitan existence, however, is aspired to as well by corporate media conglomerates seeking borderless travel for and infinite local access to and accommodation of their programming. This iteration of cosmopolitanism, meanwhile, embraces an immortality that takes the form of "sustainable economic growth" where death is evaded through the constant expansion and growth of the "free" market. This cosmopolitanism derives from the neo-liberal imaginary. Neo-liberalism, as both an ideology and a system of policies, aggressively pursues a form of pro-trade economic "freedom" that it understands to be "the mere absence of constraints on business," in the process reifying the abstract (and aggregate) "market" for such trading as the ultimate arbiter of resource allocation.[8] The very infrastructure that allows for the global circulation of labor, material, capital, and culture (trade agreements and regulations, treaties and transportation systems, and the bureaucracies that negotiate, implement and administer them all) is seen through the neo-liberal lens as obstructions, boundaries, and locations to be overcome (i.e. impediments to free market trade). With the market as its only acknowledged legitimate constraint, neo-liberal programs emphasize the unbounded, unobstructed transcendence of global trade and capital across national and other borders through a legislative agenda of deregulation and privatization. Such regulatory and legislative initiatives, however, often sharply delimit individual political freedoms in deference to an ideology of the free market. Stringent intellectual property legislation, impediments upon the organization of labor, and the effective silencing of political and economic dissent, for example, all serve as structural answers to unpalatable constraints on the freedoms of corporate unboundedness. While the neo-liberal imaginary pretends to elide it, this global infrastructure of multiple state institutions guaranteeing and regulating the "freedom" of markets is the very condition of its existence. Hence the enticement (if also the limits) of a cosmopolitan existence.

But cosmopolitanism has always been more an aspiration than an actual mode of existence. As the editors of the collection *Cosmopolitanism* write in their introduction, "cosmopolitanism is not some known entity existing in the world, with a clear genealogy . . . that simply awaits more detailed description at the hands of scholarship. We are not exactly certain what it is, and figuring out why this is so and what cosmopolitanism may be raises

difficult conceptual issues. As a practice, too, cosmopolitanism is yet to come, something awaiting realization'' (Breckenridge et al. 2002). There exist, as the very foundation of neoliberal economic initiatives, too many organizational restraints and institutional ties to ever literalize a global existence that is truly unbounded, unobstructed, or surely unlocated. Not the least of these restraints come from the central role of the state in articulating, negotiating, and regulating the very conditions of economic as well as cultural globalization – if only in the name of increased ''competitiveness.'' Indeed, as Divya McMillin has observed, ''Cosmopolitanism is now a nationalist project and the cultivation of the consumer becomes as important for the state government as it is for private corporations'' (2007: 101).

Predicated on material and structural bindings it seeks to overcome, the fantasy of cosmopolitan existence, therefore, is located in the aspiration – always deferred – of transcendence. While there is no actual unbounded, unlocated existence, there remains the ultimately unrealizable desire to overcome boundaries and comfortably inhabit multiple localities. This is ultimately the identity television in transition increasingly asks us to inhabit and share, an identity that is wounded by the impossibility of its own aspiration.

Watching the programs detailed in the following chapters – in space, in time, and in common – allows us to understand how this identity circulates, is made appealing and is meaningful for both the institutions of television and the viewers of television. These meanings are interwoven, but not identical and not simply reflections of each other. At both the institutional level and within the narratives presented, the programs considered in the following chapters enact and negotiate with questions of spatial and temporal travel, that is, of transcendence and immortality.

The action genre is particularly well suited, therefore, to both embody and narrate this translatable identity. Even as the genre's renewed popularity is credited to it translatability, the hero, whose home is ''simultaneously everywhere and nowhere'' has been an archetype in adventure stories since the nineteenth century (Taves 1993: 178), recalling the imperial lineage of both cosmopolitan form and hero. The programs analyzed in the chapters that follow feature heroes who, in different ways, combine unfettered spatial travel with temporal transcendence as a defining feature of their heroic identities, enabling them to traverse spatial and temporal borders, and inhabit the imaginary of twenty-first century modernity. They are clearly intended to be aspirational

characters: exceptional; admirable; and greatly privileged. Their border crossings signify cosmopolitan privileged exceptionalism and transcendence rather than the riskier necessity of breaching borders in pursuit of labor opportunities or political amnesty. These characters represent not the labor force of the new century, but the beneficiaries of that labor. Their worries emerge from an identity in crisis amid changing relations to space and time, not from how to obtain the next meal. Collectively, a sort of immortal cosmopolitanism, in other words, functions as the model of existence that these programs imagine as an aspiration for viewers and model for their hero and also for their own circulation as texts.

Each of the programs in the chapters that follow offers a variation of the ongoing negotiations with and engagement of the time and space, the life and afterlife, of television. *Highlander*, for example, allows us to interrogate a critical geography of both co-production and cosmopolitan identity as particular engagements of the time and space of the (post) national. *Smallville*'s engagement of corporate property through an indefinite iteration and attenuation of brand identity is considered in the context of a character perpetually deferring his inevitable destiny. *24* offers a distinctive graphical and narrative reconstruction of "TV time" for a character's ongoing navigation of geopolitical crisis. *Doctor Who* demonstrates a public-service-mandated engagement with the regeneration of collective viewing; across demographics, in the same place, at the same time.

Each of these programs represents an example of everyday television produced under the pressure of negotiating rapidly changing assumptions about culture, finance, and circulation – the structural conditions and impediments to cosmopolitan existence. They each feature heroes who are cosmopolitan, exhibiting new and complex forms of spatiotemporal relations within the changing pressures of neo-liberal economics that blur domestic, public, work, leisure, and gendered roles. The series are thus characteristic of transformations in the practice of global television production and circulation that are on one level a response to the globalization of neo-liberal economies. Indeed, in the era of television in transition, it is significant that these programs' balance of familiarity and difference is increasingly typical amid a combination of international production and circulation parameters and redeployment of familiar narrative and genre tropes. Such behind-the-camera negotiations reveal a great deal about the global circulation of culture. At the same time, the text of

each program itself negotiates these same pressures, attempting to appear constantly local and amenable as it travels around the world and through time. The programs in the chapters that follow are significant for the specific ways in which they negotiate these combinations of pressures, revealing allegorical takes on their own existence as they imagine heroes relevant and interesting to globally, technologically, demographically dispersed audiences in the period of television in transition.

CHAPTER 4

Highlander
The Immortal Cosmopolitan

> *If man were immortal he could be perfectly sure of seeing the day when everything in which he trusted should betray his trust, and, in short, of coming eventually to hopeless misery. He would break down, at last, as every good fortune, as every dynasty, as every civilization does. In place of this we have death (Peirce 1998).*
>
> *I am Duncan MacLeod, born four hundred years ago in the Highlands of Scotland. I am Immortal, and I am not alone. For centuries we have waited for the time of the Gathering, when the stroke of a sword and the fall of a head will release the power of the Quickening. In the end, there can be only one.*[1]

In the 1990s a number of internationally co-produced television series began production and wide, multi-national distribution, in ways significant both for the economics of their existence and the very stories they told. Series such as *Forever Knight*, *Beastmaster*, *The Lost World*, *Sinbad*, *La Femme Nikita*, and *Relic Hunter* were produced and distributed as international joint ventures, the result of treaty arrangements between two or more nations, allowing them to overcome previously restrictive barriers (high production costs, restricted and/or limited market access) through financial incentives and a pooling of resources and markets. Other similar programming had closer ties to US media companies, but were nevertheless externally produced as "runaway" productions to circumvent labor, production, tax and tariff costs (e.g. *RoboCop*, *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*, *Xena: Warrior Princess*, *Sheena*, *Mutant X*, etc.). All these shows were designed to be highly mobile and easily consumable in distinct cultural and national locations around the world, traveling from broadcast stations to cable channels, switching timeslots, and

traversing geopolitical and linguistic borders. It is not surprising, then, that so many of them centered on the action exploits of heroic main characters.

Indeed these programs regularly drew from a combination of the western literary canon, particularly the imperial-era adventure story (*The Lost World*, *Sinbad*[2]) and widely known popular genres (western, science-fiction, espionage) for their narrative address. These programs were produced to be boundless and globally circulated, presumably telling stories that were universally translatable and utilizing templates thought amenable to a variety of localization strategies. To do so, each of these syndicated schedule-fillers drew on formerly high culture tropes to establish world-recognizable narrative credentials. Each then also updated this imaginary for a postmodern, transnational world, whether refiguring the classic action hero as heroine (*Relic Hunter*, *Raven*, *La Femme Nikita*) or anachronistically developing contemporary sensibilities in world historical settings (*Sinbad*, *Lost World*, *Beastmaster*).

Highlander: The Series was a representative, early, successful example of these developments in television programming. A program about a Scottish highlander who turns out to be immortal (unless he is decapitated), the hero of the show is presented as having wandered the planet for 400 years, at home nowhere and (by now) everywhere. An example of everyday television negotiating internationally-conceived dictates concerning culture, representation, finance, and audience, *Highlander* engaged with the structural conditions and impediments of its production and circulation by conceiving of a cosmopolitan hero who was also immortal. The series is thus characteristic of transformations in the practice of global television in transition, negotiating increasingly liberalized economies and multi-national audiences. *Highlander* became an early model for international production and circulation strategies designed to compete with the deficit-financed, big-budget US productions and the expectations they produced. As it traveled internationally, *Highlander* worked to appear, textually, constantly local and amenable, in the process revealing something of an allegorical take on its own existence as it imagined a hero that was relevant and interesting to globally dispersed audiences in the 1990s: an immortal cosmopolitan.

Highlander, in other words, asks us to consider, along with Ackbar Abbas, if there can be a "cosmopolitanism for the global age, and what would it look like?" (Abbas 2002: 226). In the process of successfully negotiating its complex textual and institutional imperatives, *Highlander*

offered two potential, interrelated answers: the institutional and the textual. One answer took the form of television programming circulating globally as a cultural commodity. The other answer took the form of Duncan MacLeod, the highlander.

Cosmopolitan Media Giant: The Highlander

> we [may] conceive of the practice of cosmopolitanism as literary communication that travels far, indeed, without obstruction from any boundaries at all, and, more important, that thinks of itself as unbounded, unobstructed, unlocated – writing of the great Way, instead of the small Place . . . (Pollock 2002).

When, at the start of the 1990s, the French media company Gaumont S. A. (''the world's oldest film production company'') funded a subsidiary, Gaumont Television, it was with the explicit mandate ''to produce quality television programming for a global audience'' (Ginsburg 1993). This was part of Gaumont's scheme for market expansion in its continuing efforts, like those of all corporate entities, to sustain economic growth. The mandate, however, left open questions of what ''quality'' was and what constituted a ''global'' audience. Intriguingly, the new subsidiary got to work producing such programming by addressing these concerns, implicitly at least, each as a function of the other. The mandate itself was, thus, functionally considered to be tautological: a quality program would be one that attracted audiences from around the globe, while a global audience would be found by widely distributing a quality program.

The first program produced under this mandate accumulated a large enough audience, worldwide, to be considered by the television industry an international success. It was called *Highlander: The Series*. Instead of an original concept, it was based on a 1986 feature film, *Highlander* (Russell Mulcahy),[3] and its 1991 sequel. These were not particular successes in the United States until released on video, but they garnered a strong following in much of Europe as well as Japan. The television series was in production from 1992 to 1998 and consisted of 119 episodes. The ratings were strong if not spectacular and the show was nearly equally popular among male and female audiences (Ginsburg 1993). At its peak the series aired in well over 100 nations, from Japan to New Zealand and from South Africa to Germany.

By licensing the *Highlander* brand for its first television production, Gaumont obtained a recognizable intellectual property[4] that already

contained several elements to help the company address the criteria posed in the company mandate. The property contained narrative elements that were easily translatable across linguistic and cultural barriers, including sword fights, special-effects, clearly defined "bad guys," and world-wide locations. *Highlander* represented, in other words, a pre-sold brand with recognizable genre traits, a cinematic heritage, narrative transparency, and yet a potential excess of semiotic meanings. These are qualities that favor successful global circulation. Thus the attributes that such a "property" offers are closely judged in relation to the pragmatics of producing and distributing a television series intended for audiences in many different nations. As the late executive producer Bill Panzer suggested, a "world-wide familiarity with the concept and the characters" made "a *Highlander* TV series a natural" (quoted in Thomas 1997).

The challenge was to convert these attributes into a "quality" weekly series. As one producer from the first season put it, "our job was to make a show that would satisfy everybody and still have a vision that was true to the show that we wanted to make." Looking back, that same producer considers that "it was really a big undertaking to make this show work under certain parameters for television and have it find an audience" (quoted in Thomas 1997). Such parameters included not only making each episode "cinematic" on the comparatively low budget and tight timeline of weekly television, but also negotiating the terms of co-production agreements, maintaining genre and narrative consistency, and establishing the story as a series that could continue over multiple episodes and numerous seasons.[5] Referring to the *Highlander* feature films' proclivity for showing decapitations, for example, another first season producer summarized the television production team's method of translating the favorable globalizing attributes into quality television: "that was one of the things we had to lick right off the bat, which was not be graphic but do something sensational with effects and music – basically be stylistic" (quoted in Thomas 1997).

Right from the very start, then, *Highlander* was interested in flaunting self-conscious displays of style, effects, and an overall "cinematic" look. In the era of televisual stylistic exhibitionism (Caldwell 1995), this is how Gaumont's mandate was put into practice. Indeed "quality" television, as a distinct programming strategy, emerged as one form of televisuality.[6] It was reasonable to understand Gaumont's mandate for quality programming as calling for productions with the right look and style to capture global audiences from the competition.

Promotional material surrounding the debut of *Highlander* consistently remarked on the style, quality, and "high production values" as significant selling points for the series. "The Making of *Highlander: The Series*,"[7] distributed prior to the first season, offered a lengthy montage of interviews with the stars, directors, writers, stunt coordinators, and special effects crew along with spectacular scenes of choreographed violence and special effects from upcoming episodes (mixed indiscriminately with excerpts from the two feature films) in order to demonstrate to programmers (and perhaps potential audiences) the quality and the international appeal of the upcoming episodes. The series, viewers are both told and shown, will look as good as and yet different from anything else on television. Its production values will be as high as those of the feature films. This was the hard sell for a television program produced outside Hollywood: don't worry, the show will "look" good. *Highlander* will be thoughtfully and stylishly shot, edited, and even cast. Televisuality was a top priority, as supervising producer/creative consultant David Abramowitz recently recalled, "We weren't a rich show, and we wanted as much to be on the stage as possible" (personal communication). It would, in other words, utilize strategies of stylistic exhibitionism to stand out from other programming, attract viewers, and represent itself as a quality, cosmopolitan production. By the early 1990s this was not so much an innovation as it was a simple – if expensive – necessity of successful television production.

Highlander took these production techniques further, however, turning the series' production conditions into an asset, by emphasizing the stylistic exhibitionism as a certain kind of authenticity. Other promotional material has emphasized, sometimes to absurd lengths, the authenticity of historical costumes, "actions" – the elaborate sword fights (with period-appropriate weapons and fighting styles), for example – music, dance, and – significantly, given its production arrangements – location.[8] The historical period and locations were constantly changing, but always televisually produced to appear real and authentic. Moreover, this authenticity was significant in the production's strategy for attracting audiences at a variety of local sites of reception. As the text traveled around the world, so too did its diegesis authentically encompass the world. The attention to detail was intended to breed moments of familiar recognition and local resonance as *Highlander* traveled to audiences around the globe.

Finally, part of the production strategy was a roster of internationally recognizable guest stars. In addition to appearances by Christopher Lambert (of the *Highlander* feature films) and Richard Moll (*Night*

Court) in the pilot episode, stars included former Miss America (1982) Elizabeth Ward Gracen,[9] Dom Deluise's son Peter, Prince's former entourage member Vanity, and former wrestler Roddy Piper. The web page "*Highlander*: The Official Site" offered for sale, for a time, a special collection of episodes in which international rock stars such as Roger Daltrey, Joan Jett, Roland Gift, and Sheena Easton made guest appearances. Such a roster, in combination with the look and the authenticity, was part of the production's plan for international circulation. Each element was meant to be instantly recognizable to audiences around the globe, thereby placing the familiar within the diegetic world no matter where in the world the show was viewed.

Achieving "quality" of this sort, intended to penetrate world-wide markets and gather a global audience, would be expensive. In order to compete with the kind of production values and practices normally associated with Hollywood and gain entry into various television markets, the less-well-financed Gaumont turned, as was becoming an increasingly common and successful practice, to the strategy of international joint venture. If the series was to be expensive and globally popular, the cost and risk would be shared – among entities in different countries – and the show produced around the globe (or at least a few scenic parts of it).

Co-Producing Culture

– He came across this one in Ghana. Said it cost him an arm and a leg.
– Did he say whose?[10]

Timed to coincide with European Union rule changes regarding domestic content, *Highlander* was produced as an official, international co-production. The timing was particularly significant "since 1992 [the year of *Highlander*'s debut], [was] when France designated all Franco-Canadian television productions, even those developed in English [such as *Highlander*], as European works. Consequently, these coproductions qualify as domestic content [not only in France, but] throughout the European Union" (Tinic 2003: 172). Here the structures of state regulation and official treaty negotiations allow for the "unfettered" travel of a cultural commodity. In order to distribute production costs among multiple partners, benefit from tax and tariff relief, and qualify as a "local" production in both Canada and France, the *Highlander* production agreed to terms

established by and was produced under arrangements resulting from treaties ratified by the French and the Canadian governments dating back to 1983.[11]

In fact, "quota" markets such as Canada and France, where local production factors are often necessary in obtaining airtime, saw a particular rise in co-production arrangements during this era. It is because of similar local requirements, Serra Tinic notes, that such joint venture agreements "depend less on cultural and linguistic similarities than on congruent regulatory environments in the participant countries" (Tinic 2003: 172). Thus, instead of partnering with an apparently more similar collaborator, such as Great Britain, Canada has much more frequently worked with other quota countries such as France.

Such partnerships, however, are premised on paradoxical regulatory initiatives. If the show was to imagine itself as unbounded and unlocated, it would need to partake in international treaties, follow tightly controlled production quotas, and be produced in (several) specific locations. Indeed, partnerships premised foremost on regulatory environments in particular are bound to strain the very content and representational imperatives they have been charged with facilitating in the first place. How could the same, English-language production be "domestic" content in Canada, France, and across the European Union? As Paul W. Taylor (1995) has noted regarding the paradox of co-production arrangements, "the objectives are both cultural (the preservation and promotion of indigenous expression) and economic (the creation of wealth and jobs for crafts people and artists)." He summarizes the problem by simply noting that "clearly these objectives can be at cross-purposes with each other" (Taylor 1995). Thus, while the product that emerges from international co-production conditions is charged with balancing local resonance and international marketability, the very process of appearing domestic amid the programming of multiple local sites of reception tends to elide the distinct cultural markers valued by the participating treaty partners. In the case of *Highlander*, for example, half of each season was shot in and around Vancouver but this city was never identified within the diegesis. In fact, episodes are sprinkled with subtle suggestions that this was meant to be a US city.[12] At the same time, French production partners found themselves with a series featuring only minor roles for French actors and shot entirely in English.

This is one result when the cultural objectives of such treaties get codified in terms of particular types of pre-defined content elements and

labor quotas (locations and identities) while the economic objectives tend to dislocate the participating companies from local sites of production and reception.[13] As the authors of *Global Hollywood* have suggested:

> International co-production in the screen industry asks us to consider the question of culture and national origin. As a practice of international cultural collaboration, co-production destabilises national measures of cultural identity, while also reinscribing them in treaty language that struggles to find national descriptors that will help preserve cultural worth (Miller et al. 2001: 87).

For the *Highlander* production team, this meant a careful set of calculations that would balance on-screen appeal to different audiences with the carefully (sometime baroquely) prescribed rules of co-production. As series producer Ken Gord recalls:

> I knew exactly how many non-content exclusions we had been allowed by Telefilm Canada and so whenever I cast a Tex Cobb or Stella Stevens, or each time Elizabeth Gracen or Stan Kirsch was in an episode, I was keeping a running tally. As was the production accountant. Because, as I said, not only is each creative element subject to co-production rules, there is a strict "spend," whereby a certain percentage of the production budget must be spent in or on elements of one of the co-producing countries and a certain percentage in the other. A small percentage of the budget is allowed for non-content and this must be carefully tracked because to go over the allowable allotment could risk the entire co-production (Gord, personal communication).

Similarly, when US citizen David Abramowitz was hired during the first season's run as supervising producer and writer, he soon found himself instead credited on screen more vaguely as "Creative Consultant." As he recalls, the initial TF1 production deal ended and the program found financing by becoming an official French-Canadian co-production, meaning that treaty rules applied to his position, altering his title:

> the first year I could write scripts and I could be a producer on the show, which is why my title changed. After that I could no longer write original scripts. And that was because of the treaty rule, because it became a Canadian-French co-production. And then we had certain rules about how many French writers . . . we had to have, like eight or nine French nationals write scripts, or ten, every year (Abramowitz, personal communication).

The paradoxes of international co-production arrangements that stem from national efforts at the maintenance of self-representation and official ideals of essential national character are highlighted by such detailed concerns over the citizenship of various production staff and their relative contributions. The paradox stems from the fact that in order to compete with successful foreign cultural production, many national media producers increasingly rely on international cooperation. In other words, as Miller et al. conclude, "co-production marks a site of transformation in cultural scale, from the local and national to the regional and global" (2001: 87). A transformation, that is, from the small Place to the great Way (Pollock 2002).

Highlander soon became a model of the advantages offered through international joint venture agreements. It drew on neo-liberal policies and regulatory practices to feel equally at home around Europe and much of North America, embracing a grand deployment of aspirational cosmopolitanism. Far from being actually unbounded, however, the cosmopolitanism of *Highlander* emerged from the input of a number of nationally based participating partners. Thus does the production of *Highlander* portend to a number of significant innovations in the rise of the international co-production in the television industry. As a co-production between France's Gaumont Television and Filmline in Canada,[14] the unobstructed series found financial production participation in its first year from Telefilm Canada (2002) and the CNC in France, with investments (and creative input) coming in the first year from license partners (distributors) in the US (Rysher at about 25 percent of the operating budget), France (TF-1 about 25 percent), Germany (RTL-Plus about 30 percent), Italy (Reteitalia about 15 percent), and Japan (Amuse Video, about 5 percent).[15] While Gaumont initially handled global distribution rights, the American company Rysher TPE, which was not only flush with cash, having recently been part of a large media merger,[16] but – sensing the trend of the future – was also eager to establish international partnerships, assumed this role after the first season[17] (Guider 1993). Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's Reteitalia also expanded its role in the second season, distributing the show across southern and eastern Europe.

These partnerships, so far as the industry was concerned, rendered "the economics on this one ... very favorable" (quoted in Mahoney 1992). The lessons of the series' success impacted future partnerships. Commenting on the production assembled, industry trade journals were replete with comments such as "this is absolutely the trend that is starting to come

together now in terms of figuring out more sensible ways of financing programs'' (Brennan 1992). The level of interest and excitement expressed by these industry trade journals suggests the significance of this newly developing model of competition with Hollywood. From this perspective, the expected benefits of such a partnership, including the opening of markets, pooling of talent, and financial incentives, were largely realized by *Highlander*. For example, the series was budgeted initially at about US$1.1 million per episode, not only significantly higher than a typical budget for such a series at the time (US$600,000 to US$800,000) but with roughly twice the usual funding from European partners for a program airing on US television.

These Hollywood-like figures were cited as important in *Highlander* becoming a rare series to find only minority funding from the US and yet still be syndicated in US markets, as ''the first European coproduced weekly hour to be sold into the US syndication market'' (Sherwood 1996: S6). As William Mahoney had explained to readers of *Electronic Media* in 1992, ''A co-produced series that airs in the United States is usually driven by the US partner, which provides the bulk of the financing and initiates the production deal, and then relies on European partners to offset the costs.'' *Highlander* represented quite a different strategy at the time, as Mahoney continued:

> the deal behind the new ''Highlander'' hour drama series . . . works the other way around: A French production company [Gaumont] is driving the series and about three-quarters of the project's $1.1 million per-episode budget is coming from outside of the United States . . . Independent distributor Rysher Entertainment, the US syndicator of the series, was able to get involved in the series with minimal risk because the partners in Europe, where the first feature film was especially popular, are bearing most of the cost[18] (Mahoney 1992).

This was such an influential arrangement because entrée into the US market remains the gold standard and often therefore the ultimate goal of many international (co- or otherwise) productions.[19] In fact, as Tinic, Alvarado, and others have observed, ''the preferred global audience for most international producers, given its sheer size as a single, English-language target market with a high percentage of domestic television ownership, is the American [US] audience'' (Alvarado 1996; Tinic 2003). Therefore, in the case of *Highlander*, even before its premiere,

the trade press was looking for it to be "the vanguard of an aggressive new approach to the American market from overseas players" (Brennan 1992). At the time it was felt that "a success in 'Highlander' could bode well for the domestic syndication market because such deals could allow more distributors to be players in the big-ticket area of hour dramas" (quoted in Mahoney 1992). Thus *Highlander* would represent a distinctly non-US narrative[20] entering into the US market.

Highlander ran in the States initially in first-run syndication, but more prominently in reruns stripped weekdays across cable's USA Network in that cable channel's early efforts to establish a brand through a regularly scheduled primetime lineup of its own. Indeed this would prove (if incidentally) prescient. While this coproduction was successful worldwide and in the US as a first-run, syndicated, action hour, by the end of its run, such syndicated programming was already in decline. Original, first-run dramatic action programs are now produced primarily for existing broadcast networks and cable channels, surrounded by similar programming appealing to similar audiences, rather than finding different timeslots on different local stations through a national syndicator. At the time, even before the USA Network deal was in place (in its second season), *Highlander* ran on more than 125 stations in the US[21] potentially reaching approximately 95 percent of the television audience (albeit sometimes in timeslots that were difficult to access, like after midnight or mid-day on weekends). The ratings were strong if not spectacular in the first season. Indeed, characteristic of the industry's demographic fetishes and silver-lining-seeking, *Highlander* was reported to have debuted with the rather specific distinction of number one "new syndicated action hour" among men aged 18 to 49, 18 to 34, and women aged 18 to 49 (Ginsburg 1993: 130). In these terms *Highlander* was successful, managing to turn a net profit in its first year of production even before it was licensed to US cable or several key nations (e.g. the UK and Australia).

Such success in the US and worldwide, however, depended on managing the tension between elaborate international agreements and the desire to present an unbounded yet coherent program. As John Sinclair et al. (1996) observe, participation in coproductions and international media trade markets changes the target audience for nationally local producers – and not simply tilted toward the US (although the US remains a major factor). This is because the "primary audience which regulates the flow of peripheral programming internationally" becomes the international media buyers and distributors who enter into agreements

where "rough-and-ready genre expectations are in play." This initial audience of co-investors has predetermined constituencies of global audiences that "have already been divided into psychographic genre zones for the purpose of television sales." Tinic notes, for example, that it is believed that "police series are popular in Germany while 'environmentally conscious Scandinavians' tend to be interested in ecological documentaries" (Rice-Barker 1996; Sinclair et al. 1996; Tinic 2003: xx). This was certainly the experience reported by *Highlander*'s producers. Abramowitz, for example, recalls constantly negotiating the local expectations of various national broadcasters:

> for example, the French thought they were buying a show which was a crimefighter with a sword. The Germans thought they were buying a show which dealt with sword and sorcery and that genre. The Japanese thought they were buying an action-adventure show in which rock stars would be starring. So people had different agendas, which made it very difficult, very, very difficult, and you had to do this little dance between everyone and try to make as many people happy. Unfortunately, sometimes you couldn't make everyone happy, and then what you just had to do was keep moving forward (Abramowitz, personal communication).

For Gaumont Television's head of international co-production in 1993, Marla Ginsburg, this resulted in the need to carefully respect Gaumont's license partners' "cultural differences" and take their input seriously even while she agreed that "you can't please all the people all of the time" (Ginsburg 1993). Negotiating between the various partners truly involved every detail of the production and the resulting text. Recalling the first season of the series, for example, Ginsburg noted that the Japanese partners were continually dissatisfied with the props ("I knew I was in big trouble when they wouldn't accept the doorknobs") (quoted in Kaye & Marich 1996). Abramowitz similarly recalls, "Germany wouldn't allow shows on suicide. [In general] We couldn't do a show that dealt with abortion. There were certain taboos we had to respect" (Abramowitz personal communication). Such nutshell summaries of cultural difference in genre expectations proved operationally useful "in the trenches" of the daily production of the series as well. Producer Ken Gord recalls understanding the show he was producing to play "in the United States to a predominately adult audience" because "it was considered mature, not because of violence or nudity, but because of its overall theme and density. It never really caught on with teenagers" (Gord, personal

communication). At the same time, he recalls, "in France, however, it was exactly the opposite – an afternoon show for adolescents. No French person over 18 would be caught dead watching this triteness" (Gord, personal communication). Thus the program was produced and distributed within a blending of genre expectations and short-hand tropes of national identity.

At the same time, an apparently nervous Rysher president, Keith Samples, was telling US trade journals that "this is not a European travelogue" (quoted in Mahoney 1992). Ambivalent at best about his role as a minority partner in which Rysher's say was not final, Samples admitted elsewhere that "the producer is leading French entertainment conglomerate Gaumont," but nevertheless insisted (misleadingly and somewhat inaccurately) that the series "is being lensed here with an American line producer and crew" (by "here" he apparently meant Vancouver) (quoted in Brennan 1992). Ginsburg (1993) then felt the need to reassert that "my employer, Gaumont Television, is the copyright holder and sole production entity." Abramowitz recalls "there was the Japanese, there was the Germans, there was the French, there were the Italians. And they all gave notes on each of the shows. And unfortunately, many of them had different views of what the show was." For Abramowitz this meant, "I answered to everybody. I was the international shit deflector" (Abramowitz, personal communication). Such squabbles highlight not only just how difficult negotiating international genre production and circulation can be, but also the need for individual markets to make claims of localness for the program. Each locality wanted the program to be, in some way, theirs. Ginsburg's response was to be adamant about the necessity for the production to remain consistent despite such squabbling, insisting, "I have often had to make several rounds of phone calls to arbitrate differences or fight for my creative vision in an effort to avoid what has commonly been dubbed 'Europudding' " (Ginsburg 1993).

Such Europudding might result from European co-productions in which the "heterogeneity of modes of address, points of view, programme genres, styles of presentation, codes of recognition," in other words the semiotic excess typical of all televisual programming, is not, due to competing interests, properly disciplined. Ginsburg's "creative vision" is another way of noting, along with John Hartley, that "television is characterized, in effect, by excess, providing audiences with an excess of options which can nevertheless be easily recognized, and offering an excess of pleasures (one of which is to choose between those on offer) which can

nevertheless be disciplined into familiar, predictable forms'' (Hartley 1992: 117). With a case like *Highlander*, television's excesses might be located within a single program. If, in an international co-production, semiotic excess is both crucial and unavoidable, then so too is the necessity of disciplining it into – that is binding it to – familiar, predictable forms. To travel unobstructed would be ineffective without the discipline of familiar constraints.

The strategy chosen for *Highlander* and its hero was to rise above such squabbling, be aspirational, and to present an idealized, cosmopolitan existence in the form of a hero with no *particular* national identity, but at home *everywhere*. Such a strategy embraced the complex negotiations behind the camera, presenting a text that would travel seemingly effortlessly between France and Canada and then around the world. The series was shot primarily in Vancouver (which was never specifically identified in the series) and Paris (which was) while the first season's regular cast included British (Adrian Paul), American (Stan Kirsch), French (Alexander Vandernoot),[22] and German (Werner Stocker) actors. Extra, often more explicit, footage was shot for inclusion in some systems while excised in the US to make room for additional commercial spots.[23] Such carefully choreographed cosmopolitanism is not accomplished without strong and elaborate ties to a complex infrastructure.

If the text of *Highlander* looked cosmopolitan and also circulated as if it were, this was possible not because the program was truly unfettered, but on the contrary, precisely because it relied upon elaborate arrangements between states and corporations to find accommodation in the infrastructure of television at different localities around the globe. The accumulated excess of creative input that resulted from these negotiated arrangements, however, established production requirements that threatened to turn the show into Europudding.

In addition to the institutional restraints that enabled unfettered circulation, therefore, the series found itself similarly reliant upon textual restraints to organize and discipline the unavoidable semiotic excess. The production turned this into an advantage as producers took a part of the feature film upon which the series was based – 400+ years of world travel accessible through the device of elaborately constructed flashbacks – and used it to turn potentially incongruous production conditions and necessities into an asset and less directly into an allegory on global being amid neo-liberal globalization. This was the ''predictable'' form that would bind the excess and provide global access to the narrative. The series

thus embraced a cosmopolitanism implicit in its institutional mandate as an explicit textual appeal and narrative conceit in a unique and compelling way. The cosmopolitan ideal was utilized as an overriding organizational metaphor in conjunction with fairly standard industry production strategies and predictable genre conceits occasioned by the co-production arrangements. All of this was made transparent to audiences, literally in the first seconds of each episode. This, *Highlander* offered, is what cosmopolitanism for the global age would look like.

Warrior, Lover, Wanderer

> He is Duncan MacLeod, the Highlander. Born in 1592 in the Highlands of Scotland, he is still alive. He is Immortal. For four hundred years he's been a warrior, a lover, a wanderer, constantly facing other Immortals in combat to the death. The winner takes his enemy's head and with it, his power (Voice-over pre-credit introduction, seasons 4–6).

These words, intoned by the gravelly voice of a character who is himself a "Watcher" and illustrated with a televisually over-produced montage of sequences from recent episodes, backed by a pulsating, synthesized beat, and followed by the explosion of Queen's bombastic, guitar-driven theme song "Princes of the Universe," introduced each episode of *Highlander: The Series*. More concisely and evocatively than any narrative analysis, this introductory voice-over suggests the very appeal of the series even as it explains the premise. Duncan MacLeod, played by the improbably attractive former model and professional dancer Adrian Paul, cannot die except by losing his head. A foundling in 1592, Mac, as his friends call him, is "killed" in combat in 1622 but utterly fails to die. Henceforth he does not age, will not get sick, heals very quickly, but cannot have children. He is part of a mysterious race that lives among us but secretly battle each other. Following the "Rules"[24] of "The Game," they gain the essence of defeated foes through the "Quickening" until only one Immortal remains to claim "The Prize."[25] All this the viewer learns through an elaborate series of flashbacks to different periods in the 400-year backstory of Mac's life. This is the narrative technique and fantastical conceit inherited by the series from the feature film. *Highlander* was thus a complexly constructed amalgam of reliably predictable television pleasures – action and violence, stylish shooting and locations, romance and sex, good and evil.

Unlike similar, syndicated series such as *Xena: Warrior Princess* (1995–2001) or the cheeky *Beastmaster* (1999–2002) and also unlike narratively similar network programs such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997–2003) on the one hand or *Quantum Leap* (1989–1993) on the other, *Highlander* carefully constructed an explicitly retrograde white masculinity that was struggling, literally in every episode, to survive. It thus sets up a rubric for later series (e.g. *Smallville*, *24*, and *Doctor Who*) to build from as a televisual representation of white masculine heroics in crisis. This white masculinity (Scottish, violent, chivalrous, adhering to a code – or Rules – of conduct) was romanticized in the series as both rugged and cosmopolitan, yet, clearly also objectified and sexualized. White masculinity became an occasion for contemplation and nostalgia. It was deemed by the production to be locally amenable around the world because it was understood as universally and "immortally" appealing. The historical trajectory of the series' serial narrative was the maintenance of this masculinity amid the continuing erasure of markers of national distinction.

In addition to a complex story-world inherited from the original property – indeed part of its appeal – the (co)production conditions of the series multiplied the potential semiotic excesses of a continuing series. Given its conceit and history as two feature films, Ken Gord notes, "the show was not user-friendly" (K. Gord, personal communication). With a complex set of rules and characters with hundreds of years of flashbacks, *Highlander* could be challenging as everyday television. "You could jump into a *Xena* or *Baywatch* at any time and get into the story within a few minutes. Not so with *Highlander*. The casual viewer would be confused by the 'rules' of the Game, be hard-pressed to understand what was going on, and unless they were prepared to spend some time educating themselves on the mythology of the show, it was impenetrable" (K. Gord, personal communication). While rewarding sustained attention, a strategy was called for that would also allow for casual access. It is for these reasons that each of Mac's roles – warrior, lover, wanderer – signaled well-established television genres at play in the series. *Highlander: The Series* would discipline its textual excesses via recourse to the constraints of genre. In order to be received and accommodated effectively as it traveled without bounds, *Highlander* would have to be bound to the limitations of genre. Genre disciplines semiotic excess by suggesting a procedure for prioritizing, organizing, and interpreting. This is what Samuel R. Delany has called a "protocol of reading" (Delany 1980: 176). The strictures of genre signal the reader or the viewer to organize the narrative and character

excesses occasioned, in this case, by the conditions of production. Its narrative circulation was bound to a well-established underlying generic infrastructure.

On television, genre has a number of disparate functions. For programmers and schedulers, for example, *Highlander* was an hour-long drama. For promotion departments it was an action-fantasy hour. For audiences – as constructed by the conventions of the industry – the important genres corresponded to Mac's roles: it was action (warrior), romance (lover), and historical fantasy (wanderer). Each of these was intended to appeal to discrete audience groups defined demographically and psycho-graphically by gender, age, and nation, for example. Together they were to form a new, coalition audience, now no longer a "mass" but instead composed of distinct groups and interests, watching together. Thus, as has been documented of many series of the late 1980s and 1990s,[26] another aspect of *Highlander*'s stylistic exhibitionism was that it was generically recombinant. Its text borrowed from strategies and icons of several popular genres. As the founder of a world-wide *Highlander* fan club, Krystmas Tarr, explained: "Some male fans like the sword fights. A lot of women like the romance. Others like the clothing and historical flashbacks. I can't really nail down the one thing that makes it so popular" (quoted in Brovsky 1996). As producer Ken Gord agreed, "I wondered why the show had broad crossover appeal and realized that women loved the romance, the costumes, the characters, younger men loved the action, sword fights and pyro, and older viewers loved that it was a thinking man's [sic] action show" (K. Gord, personal communication 2008). It was precisely this combination of generic appeals and expectations that combined to make the series amenable to a variety of globally dispersed audiences, divided up into national and demographic pools whose "interests" could be catered to within a single, multivalent, text. Such a strategy of multiple genre deployment was not unique amid the multi-channel universe of commercial television where demographic niches are sought by narrow-focused advertisers.

What *Highlander* added to this practice of generic recombination was an awareness of its international-co-production conditions that it exploited in an overriding emphasis on immortal cosmopolitanism. But such an emphasis was grounded in the deployment of a combination of reliable and familiar genre tropes. Thus these particular genres were utilized for their presumed translatability across linguistic, national, and cultural barriers; in other words, for their perceived ability to facilitate

the series' unfettered travel. The hero that emerged found himself dispersed over many generic expectations, negotiating the recombination of multiple appeals in place of the presumption of universal appeal. He would be damaged, scarred, but also ready for action.

Warrior

Highlander certainly provided its global audience with action. The expectation of and explanation for the visceral thrills of the sword fight, decapitation, and special effects in which nearly every episode culminated, were understood through a familiarity with the action genre. At the same time, these very thrills have been understood for decades as particularly well-suited to the intentions of global distribution (Osgerby et al. 2001: 28).

Lead actor Paul described his character as a modern day swashbuckler (Sokolsky 1992). Demonstrating his commitment to the authenticity and stylistic exhibitionism of the series, Paul, already trained in dance, spent the entire run of the series training in martial arts and sword fighting techniques to further enhance these fight sequences. Nearly every episode of the series ended with a nod to The Game, in which two Immortals know that "in the end, there can be only one" and ritualistically fight each other, one on one, to the death. The combat is spectacular as the participants have hundreds of years of experience between them and the producers were careful to choreograph and shoot the sequences in new and visually exciting ways. The combat is also gruesome as death can only come from beheading, a fact that usually limits combat weapons to those with sharp edges (and with censors in mind, climatic filming to sharp, suggestive angles). The fights conclude with a self-consciously orgasmic, special-effects-laden "Quickening" in which the essence of the loser passes to the winner and episodic narrative resolution is achieved. Such sequences are visually spectacular, presumably requiring little translation for their appeal.

Lover

Similarly, the generic tropes of popular romance allowed Mac himself to be part of the spectacle. Romance positioned the hero to be viewed as a lover and allowed the series an excuse to display his body. No philanderer he, the women he loves are dispersed over the 400 years of Mac's life. Perhaps drawing on more classical tropes of the romance genre, Mac is a clearly

defined hero who ultimately exists in relative isolation from society. Inevitably outliving his many loves, Mac is always eventually a loner.

This is thematized and narrated over his extraordinarily long life. *Highlander* was one of several series to emerge in the 1980s and 1990s in which a white hero, by miraculous conceit, travels through space and time to engage on a personal level in world historical events. But, even if its fantastic conceit (an Immortal hero whose long life is manifested in the text of the series as haphazard temporal and spatial travel signaled through multiple, complex flashbacks) is not completely unique, it serves a unique thematic purpose. While the stylistically impressive US series *Quantum Leap* allowed its hero to play a series of different roles, flashing randomly around time and space as far back as the year of his birth, *Highlander* used flashback memories, encompassing considerably more history and more of the world, to develop its characters, presenting an historical story featuring a younger Mac in a situation that would parallel and inform the contemporary narrative. The younger, less experienced, more naïve Mac of the flashbacks encounters (or sometimes witnesses) a situation parallel to the one encountered by his present day self (often with the same villain). This was also not new, but reminiscent of such shows as the 1970s new-age, martial arts western series *Kung Fu* (1972–5), which utilized flashbacks to travel temporally and spatially to the mystical "Oriental" childhood background of its hero, Caine.[27] Yet *Highlander* is alone in tracing the hero's developing identity over world historical (and television) time. Just as *Highlander*'s run ended, the *Buffy* spin-off *Angel* (1999–2004) would use a similar flashback technique to document and comment upon the long life of its immortal, vampire-with-a-soul hero.

For *Highlander*, however, the flashbacks over the life of an Immortal contributed to this classical sense of the romance genre. As Bill Panzer opined on the appeal of the series, "I think that in addition to the moral questions we deal with in every episode [the good vs. evil of the action genre] it is the romantic notion that being alive for hundreds or thousands of years is an extremely lonely proposition"[28] (quoted in Scott 1996). Also aware of these genre recombinations, Abramowitz found the heart of the show was,

> at its best, where we would deal with questions of life and time and history and morals, ethics, situational ethics. Questions like, if you're immortal, how long do you have to keep a secret? And if you're immortal, how long do you have to keep a promise? What's the difference between honor and vanity? Is

> redemption truly possible? If you've been evil for 500 years and Christ-like for 50 – even though you've completely changed, you still have to pay for what you did for those 500 years. And who makes those decisions? Is it alright to kill 300 innocents today and save 5000 innocents tomorrow? We got to play in that arena and that was great fun (D. Abramowitz, personal communication).

Or, as he is otherwise fond of repeating, *Highlander*'s combined genres amounted to a "Talmudic discussion with ass kicking" (D. Abramowitz, personal communication).

Therefore, while each individual episode of *Highlander* was structured to prominently exhibit the substantial budget allocated to the action genre, such as special effects, elaborate and authentic world-historical flashbacks, and meticulously choreographed fight sequences, it was the accumulation of romantic backstory and character complexity, and the elaboration of a detailed fictional world centering on a lonely hero, that sustained the series across more than 100 episodes. Deploying episodic-seriality, each individual episode was organized according to the dictates of the action genre while the continuing series adhered to a version of "romance" in which the primary characters are experiencing too much history in a single lifetime.[29] Still, *Highlander* was not particularly innovative television from this standpoint either. Romance, lone heroes with mysterious (if usually shorter) pasts, and degrees of seriality are instead the very stuff of dramatic television. While it did these things competently, it was not particularly innovative in their deployment and considered them part of doing business in the world of international television production. Action and romance, combined in a kind of grand melodrama, were the necessarily familiar constraints on semiotic excess deployed to accommodate international circulation and were therefore crucial to the program's ability to circulate and signify without become Europudding. What their particular combination here, in the form of a lonely Immortal man struggling and improving through the years, offered anew was a conception of time and space unique to this moment in history and crucial to the program's understanding of itself.

Wanderer

It is with the third primary genre and his role as wanderer, in particular, that *Highlander* finally comments on its own conditions of international production and global circulation. *Highlander* drew uniquely on the

institutional parameters of its own production and circulation to embrace the necessity of travel and make over Mac's temporal and spatial wandering into an aspirational fantasy of contemporary, cosmopolitan existence. With a great (in multiple senses of the word) memory, Mac's 400 years comprise a cosmopolitan picaresque romance through world history, distinguishing this brand of immortal cosmopolitanism from the espionage-genre-inspired cosmopolitan characters of certain action series in the 1960s (e.g. *The Avengers*, *The Saint*, *I Spy*, *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*). Intended from the start to wander globally and be readily accommodated to a variety of localities, the series moved textually around the world and throughout history, constructing something of a world historical epic in which the temporal order is collapsed. As Gord suggests,

> I felt the nationality of the show was international. It certainly wasn't Canadian . . . It wasn't even French . . . It didn't feel American because its locales and themes were international and universal. The lead character was Scottish, living in an unnamed US city, but really in Canada, and traveled all over the world both in present day and in flashbacks. I cannot think of a more cosmopolitan show in television history (K. Gord, personal communication).

Similarly, Abramowitz conceived of the program as essentially international in character, particularly its hero: "the character itself, Duncan MacLeod *was* an international character. He'd lived all around the world. He just happened to be living in someplace like Seattle *now*. And lived in Seattle *and* in Paris – he had his barge in Paris, so lived in both places. So he really was an international character. And the characters that came into the show were international characters" (D. Abramowitz, personal communication). The show was always locally amenable because it was all-inclusive. Mac's history has touched all of our histories. Mac's travels have passed through all our homes. At the same time, history was always readily accessible to inform and ease the present through the device of the flashback.

Typically the flashbacks served twin narrative functions. Through them *Highlander* has 400 years of world history from which to draw, thus developing an intricate and lengthy backstory for its central character. This backstory, however, served as the actual memories and experiences of the program's hero and for him the flashbacks serve to assist in his navigation of the ever-changing present. The flashbacks thus also offer a link between the burden of history and the ultimate future of the world.

It is within this international circulation, however, that the program's reliance upon tried and trusted genre elements figures so significantly. Throughout, Mac negotiates his sense of self (his character's identity) as violent, white, heterosexual masculinity in response to his eroding sense of origin and retreating markers of national identity. Thus, despite his identifying refrain of being "of the clan MacLeod" he is losing his brogue, drives French and classic American cars, fights with a Japanese katana, learned martial arts in China and, as per the Rules, respects a variety of locally sacred sites as Holy Ground. The further back the flashback, the stronger Mac's Scottish brogue, the more impulsive his actions, the less knowing his attitude (indeed there might be plenty to say about Mac's accent alone, as a marker of national distinction that fades and is typically a difference that is glossed over in the contemporary). Cumulatively, the flashbacks serve to demonstrate in an almost literal fashion that Mac is becoming increasingly worldly. But he is not the only character to change. Friends or lovers of the past may now present themselves as enemies, the ravages of time (and of The Game) having embittered them in one way or another. The series demonstrates through its structure and through comparison with other characters that Mac is a successful student and a citizen of the world: unbounded; unobstructed; and, if by necessity, unlocated. Duncan MacLeod is, in short, a rugged cosmopolitan, for a global age.

Through his temporal and spatial travel, he embodies a form of cosmopolitanism that implies an answer to Abbas's question. Because he has not only lived, but thrived for 400 years, he leads a life of privilege. He owns homes in Paris (a barge on the Seine) and the North American Pacific Northwest (a loft over a Dojo). He sells antiques from around the world (some even older than he is). He is fluent in any number of languages (some of which are now extinct). He delights in the foods, arts and literatures of the world. This co-produced schedule-filler delights in displaying its hero thoroughly enjoying the pleasures of high culture, delights in premising its everyday televisual appeal on high-brow aspirations.

At the same time, as his frequent flashbacks attest, Mac is not only versed in world history but has personally experienced most of the last 400 years of it. He has, for example, fought in the American Civil War (for the North), the Mexican revolution (against Maximillian), World War I (for the Allies), aided the French resistance in World War II, shared a meal in Russia with Cossacks, and mourned in a Kampak Monastery. Indeed it often seems as if he has seen it all before. There is rarely a villain on the

series that Mac has not previously encountered and, as the flashbacks attest, he has always already faced a similar or parallel encounter to the one he is presented with each week. Thus these world historical locations-of-the-week function differently than the monster-of-the-week in a series like *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*, here signifying the postmodern, globalized everyman; an at-ease, familiar, slightly jaded, weary international jet setter. Whereas the monsters Buffy faced provided thematic and metaphoric encounters for a young woman's coming of age, Mac's flashbacks serve primarily to establish, again and again, his aggrandized, world-historical, romantic heroic credentials. His is an identity consummated through a history of travel and consumption, an ideal of the global consumer to whom (in aspirational form) the show is also marketed.

The premise of the series, taken from the feature films, that "in the end there can be only one," suggests an ultimately teleological impulse driving its notion of history. It is all leading to an ultimate end. Translated to series television, however, this ultimate end of history – the limit of the temporal – is increasingly disavowed and consistently undermined through repeated deferral or simply narrative neglect. Instead, variations of difference are offered within a continuing repetition; there is always more history to draw from, always another episode to experience, again. The actual effect of the world-historical location of the week is to dislocate the protagonist from temporal bindings and to constantly defer the narrative promise of an ultimate Gathering resulting in the rewarding of the Prize that would effectively end history and certainly end the series. Indeed the notion of "the Gathering" soon dropped out of the series as it became clear the program would succeed and continue as a series, thus requiring the indefinite deferral of ultimate narrative closure. This is how the series imagines its hero's immortality as a complement to its own. This deferral of closure, however, comes increasingly to be thematized within the narrative as the program gradually takes on an elegiac quality.

It is his Immortality that makes Duncan MacLeod a wanderer. To provide the alibi for his Immortality (as well as the spectacular, televisual special effects with which most episodes culminate), the series draws upon elements of the fantasy genre. Like science-fiction, popular fantasy is "a genre of accumulation" which "builds narrative worlds through the slow, elaborate and often subtle accumulation of detail" (Govil 2002: 81). This explains why such programming, perhaps more than other popular genres, rewards multiple viewings and sustained investment and tends to generate more and greater fan discourse. Ken Gord notes that in *Highlander*,

"there was baggage from the past and many layers of backstory for the recurring characters and guest Immortals. There was literally a whole world of density, spatial and chronological, texturing each show" (K. Gord, personal communication). For Gord, it meant that *Highlander* could "appeal to an audience that wanted more each week than *Dukes of Hazzard* offered them" but at the same time "it was also, I realized, the show's biggest weakness – a viewer couldn't just tune in at any time and know what was happening within a few minutes as they could in most action shows" (K. Gord, personal communication). The expectations and protocols of the combined genres, therefore, complicated the potential viewing experience even as they individually offered to discipline the program's inevitable (given its production conditions) semiotic excess.

For example, if the genre of popular fantasy allows for the unusual central conceit of a race of Immortals living among us, it also mobilizes received understandings of the genre to watch the program in specific ways. As Tzvetan Todorov has described, the encounter with the fantastic (such as a person being killed but not dying, or a decapitation that results in a colorful pyrotechnic explosion) within the otherwise ordinary entails a hesitation as to the nature of the event, which the genre is disinclined to explain definitively (Todorov 1975: 63). The space of this hesitation within the text "draws attention to its own practice as a linguistic system" (Tulloch & Alvarado 1983: 132). By wondering what just happened, we are analyzing the text rather than simply lost in the story. Thus arises the possibility of understanding narrative events as practices simultaneously diegetic and extra-diegetic, with meanings beyond the internal world of the story. The fantastical conceit of the series, a cosmopolitan Immortal, in other words, asks the viewer to consider the meaning of the program as it circulates globally.

Highlander asks attentive viewers to contemplate what it means to enjoy a drama with immortal, cosmopolitan characters who are avoiding decapitation in order to win the ultimate Prize (Todorov 1975: 64). The original purpose of the colonial adventure stories from which the action genre has descended, after all, as Ella Shohat and Robert Stam remind, was "to turn boys ... into 'aggrandized subjects', an imperial race who imagined the future of the world as resting on their shoulders" (Shohat & Stam 1996: 153). *Highlander*'s fantasy elements serve to literalize this purpose within the text. If the genre traditions utilized by the series are believed to enjoy a high degree of "cross-cultural translatability" (Osgerby et al. 2001), it is clear under what terms such translations are to be made. *Highlander* asks

us to consider not only the immortality of a television character (who will live forever in reruns and other media forms at any rate), but the possibility of cosmopolitanism in the age of the global as well. It allows viewers to play, if only in their imaginations, in the space of global capital.

Duncan MacLeod offers a late twentieth-century update of the aggrandized subject for the transnational television age. A valorized member of a separate race living among us, Mac is not only literally an aggrandized subject, but, dead only upon beheading and seeker of the Prize, the future of the world rests rather literally upon his shoulders as well. As the series never tires of reminding us, in the end there can be only one Immortal, who will have accumulated the knowledge, experience, wisdom and essence of all the others. Tasteful, white, male, violent, and handsome, the character of Duncan MacLeod embodies the cosmopolitanism that a colonial power could only ever imagine for its nevertheless privileged citizens. In stark contrast to the real historical transnational migration of nineteenth-century Scottish peasants – a migration forced by their summary eviction in the cause of better maintained country estates – the eponymous Highlander, in other words, is more readily understood as a product of television in transition. He is the personification of the aspirations for the program that bears his title. Both character and program, as immortal globe-hoppers, seeking to be the "one," seek out transcendence.

As a co-production, *Highlander* is constrained through international treaty and negotiation in exchange for assurances of global circulation which in turn produce excesses both necessary and necessary-to-discipline so that local accommodation occurs amid this international travel. The accumulated detail of the combination of genres deployed by *Highlander* does more than provide an alibi for the characters' activities and a readily familiar protocol for reading: here the multiple, recombinant genres tie the series to very real cultural questions of trying to make sense of the spatial and temporal contradictions in negotiating the transnational space that global capital produces.

The Immortal Cosmopolitan

> Duncan MacLeod embodies the best qualities of heroes we have come to know and love. A good man, an able warrior, a delicious lover, and a man with a strong moral compass, he nonetheless exudes the aura of danger we

> love in our heroes. The internal paradoxes that make up Duncan MacLeod are what we find so intriguing in our favorite heroes. Leader but loner. Warrior but lover. Teacher and student. Pragmatic but passionate. Good yet filled with the capacity for great evil. (Laurie Likes 1997).

> The flashback, the travel in time, the immortality themes – these are all things that correspond to the imaginary world of a contemporary being. This was not true 30 years ago (Kirsch quoted in Krieger 1995: C1).[30]

> – Have you ever done anything to change the world? Too bad, now you never will.[31]

Together, the first two passages demonstrate *Highlander*'s twinned answer to the question posed by Abbas as to whether there can there be a cosmopolitanism for the global age. The first, a fan's reading of *Highlander*, offers us Duncan MacLeod, the fictional romantic hero and immortal cosmopolitan. The second passage, from cast member Stan Kirsch, offers us a narrative constructed from institutional imperatives but meant to appeal to the "imaginary world of a contemporary being." Together they merge to form a doubled fantasy of immortal cosmopolitan travel and accommodation.

On the one hand, as Meaghan Morris noted about *Crocodile Dundee* in the 1980s, so too is *Highlander* "one of a number of recent [series] about action, belief, and the relationship of both to 'global' situations – films about danger, adventure, commitment, credibility, global conflict, and local heroism" (Morris 1988: 243). For *Highlander* the central conceit of the series, described in the origin myth circulated by fans, is that the text travels back into history, picks an ordinary person, and imagines "what if?" that person were somehow still alive today.[32] The resulting fantasy of aggrandized subjectivity and cosmopolitan transcendence is offered, therefore, as both anybody's and everybody's. The world historical figure of Duncan MacLeod is offered as our aspirational guide in negotiating the transnational space and disrupted temporality that global capital produces. Part of the appeal of this is the way in which the great world canvas of modern history offers lessons for understanding individual existence in a complicated and rapidly changing contemporary world. MacLeod's 400 plus years of adventures, loves, and experiences are drawn on by the series to address historical lessons about personal existence amid rapidly changing, globally connected cultures. Mac's cosmopolitanism is heightened through immortality and the promise of the Prize because the series, in its televisuality, in its

circulation, and especially in the stories it tells, presumes a degree of cosmopolitanism (or such an aspiration) in all its viewers.

On the other hand, the series itself is not, of course, an aggrandized subject. No one's critical darling and never on the list of "must-see-TV," *Highlander* was a moderately successful international co-production and a capitalist commodity. And this renders somewhat suspect the guidance offered by the series and by Duncan MacLeod. As the series flashes back variously, for example, to Algiers (1653), Russia (1750), Constantinople (1753), North Africa (1755), colonial India (1764), Japan (1778), Outer Mongolia (1780), China (1780), Peru (1830), Mexico (1867), Vietnam (1968), most of Europe, and various locations and times in North America from Boston to the antebellum south, and from the old west to Greenwich Village (1958), Mac's unobstructed travel (both geographic and temporal), tasteful consumerism (generic accumulation literalized), and privileged Eurocentrism threaten to erase historical and cultural distinctions into backdrops that supply allegorical tales and consumer collectibles for a privileged subject. The fantasy of transcendence the series draws from the imperial imaginary is deployed not to offer lessons on the pleasure of empire, but rather the immortal pleasures of global consumption. This is emphasized extra-textually by vigorous efforts to market anything and everything associated with the program, from jackets and t-shirts to swords(!) and jewelry to novels, video and computer games, and handsomely packaged video and DVD collections of the episodes. On offer is the fantasy of transcendence grounded in the tasteful accumulation of world historical objects, each with an exciting story attached.

The immortal cosmopolitan offers a late-twentieth-century update to the imperial era fantasy of cosmopolitan privilege and spatial transcendence. The addition of a sustainable temporal transcendence furthers the cosmopolitan negotiation of the neo-liberal media sphere and contemporary global existence, moving through time, space, genre, and nation (the necessary constraints on existence) with ease, comfort, and style. *Highlander* serves as an important example, as it negotiated these pressures, suggesting an allegory of its own existence with a hero imagined as relevant and interesting to globally-dispersed audiences.

The paradox of the lessons *Highlander* offers is that they are produced by a cosmopolitanism elaborately tied, bound, and constrained institutionally, textually, and (multi)culturally. The final paradox of the series, then, is that the cosmopolitanism that it offers serves ultimately as a constant reminder that it cannot, finally, literally be. This is the paradox

that the immortal cosmopolitan ultimately cannot overcome; it is the aspirational fantasy of a contradictory neo-liberal ideology in denial of its own structural fetters and institutional binds. Unfettered travel and local accommodation are occasioned only by the necessary constraints imposed by government, industry, and textual organization. Each of these produces excesses that in turn require further disciplining and constraint. Cosmopolitanism in the global age is not finally the embrace of universality unencumbered by the clutter of the local, but the infinite negotiation of smaller concerns with temporality, with language, and with places.[33] The fantasy of cosmopolitanism is the fantasy of erasing the markers of these boundaries, obstructions, and locations. It is always deferred.

While this deferral is initially appealing for the on-going adventures of a television series in which characters and plots must not completely close and the Prize can never be obtained, it ultimately ends in undifferentiation. The fantasy of *Highlander*, as Tulloch and Alvarado once suggested (of another program), means that ultimately "the demonic is no longer that which threatens the hero, but that which threatens the concept of 'hero' by threatening the difference between it and the image of the character it is opposed to" (1983: 128). By the end, this threat appears to be immortality itself.

By the sixth and final season, as the star, Paul, vocalized his weariness with the role, the series exposed some serious questions about the transcendence of borders offered by immortal cosmopolitanism. Over the first five seasons Mac had lost many friends and lovers, including all the original characters from the first season, Tessa (Vandernoot), Darius (Stocker), and as the culmination of season five, his young, now Immortal, protégé, Richie (Kirsch).[34] Everyone he has ever cared about, it seems, comes to an unhappy end or betrays him. By the final season, in other words, the fantasy of transcendence – of immortal unlocation – is presented as loneliness and frustration. The obstacles transcended are ties to others, the boundaries are death and closure, the location is home. It turns out that an immortal cosmopolitan existence is not an end in itself. Functioning instead only always to defer, it creates (if only an imagined) space in which the very stuff of existence need not matter – nation and language, place and space, wealth and poverty, life and death. It is not an end at all.

CHAPTER 5

Smallville
"No Flights, No Tights": Doing Business with Superman

> *I stand for Truth, Justice, and … other stuff. (Clark Kent in* Smallville[1])

If *Highlander: The Series* began life as an already-recognizable, "pre-sold" intellectual property, having been spun off from two theatrically released feature films, then *Smallville* (2001–present) began in an all together different category, invoking significantly more history – both textual and cultural – in the form of its hero, Superman. This substantial history and accompanying wide recognition provided both an important advantage on television in the multi-channel era and a potential burden. *Smallville*'s use of Superman affected both the institutional and the narrative strategies it employed to accommodate the lengthy histories and potential afterlife of both the character, Superman, and that of the intellectual property, Superman. As a valuable corporate property, *Smallville* is about indefinite reiteration and attenuation within changing cultural and media contexts. As a globally familiar character narrative, *Smallville* is about incremental acquiescence within the infinite deferral of an already known destiny. *Smallville* represents the culmination of twentieth century transformations in commercialized use of intellectual property within the context of corporate convergence during this period of television in transition.

As a particularly lucrative branded property, Superman is an important touchstone in understanding the significance of intellectual property in television's developing strategies to master temporal as well as spatial mobility. Superman took a long path to appear on the WB and while this history allowed it to accrue substantial recognizability, it also represents a significant challenge to be negotiated in each new iteration of the character. Superman never simply appears in a new story without

already representing a long history of rights, brands, ownership, and appearances. Superman's vast familiarity across the sweeping number of popular narratives in which he appears as a character (the space of his recognizability) has transformed his status as intellectual property. As Jane Gaines has observed, "Superman, by virtue of his popularity, and because in legal theory 'super' and 'man' have achieved a *secondary meaning* in the minds of the public," has transcended the temporal limitations of copyright protection to become a trademarked property, protected potentially in perpetuity (Gaines 1991: 219).

The systematic re-iteration of familiar cultural products, therefore, not only leverages corporate investments in such intellectual property, but can form the basis for a legal argument granting that property holder perpetual exclusive rights to it. Noting how the law and corporate branding practices collude, Gaines reminds that with copyright, "if the story stands absolutely alone as a work, it will eventually fall into the public domain, taking the character with it. It will, that is, *unless it is part of a series*" (Gaines 1991: 219, emphasis in original). The spatial dispersion of numerous iterations of a character appearing consistently in different places, however, can be trademarked. With this type of legal protection "the name, physical appearance, and costumes denoting SUPERMAN (but not the physical abilities or personal traits) are protected as trademarks. And as a trademark, the name and the physical likeness of SUPERMAN are protected in perpetuity [given some caveats]" (Gaines 1991: 219). Thus the rationale for branding – "branding" is corporate jargon for the planned, systematic process of adding commercial, "iconic" value to intellectual property above and beyond any single iteration, materialization, or use of that property (Blumenthal and Goodenough 2006: 160). A brand may be "thought of as the kind of commercial and cultural aura or buzz that surrounds a name" (Moran and Malbon 2006: 108). It assists marketing and sales for a company by offering an already-known component to products associated with the brand. "Brand equity" is the term used in the entertainment industry (and more generally, in commercial culture) to attribute current and future value to this "commercial and cultural aura or buzz." This can be a complex process involving not only marketing but also the legal status of intellectual property and estimates about audience and consumers' perceptions of the property. It has become increasingly significant to the television industry as it reorganizes itself around temporal expansion and geographic saturation and therefore

seeks measures of its value put in terms of properties held and their brand equity.

The rights to Superman are (arguably) owned by DC Comics. Emerging from a strange brew of vice, organized crime, cheap fantasy, bodybuilding, and imaginative techno-futurism, the precise lineage of the small publishers of boys' science-fiction pulp magazines and the more tawdry (and at times pornographic) pulp publications that eventually supplied the nation with superhero comic books can be notoriously murky to reconstruct. Nevertheless, DC's origins have been traced at least to the 1935 formation of a small pulp magazine publisher called National Allied Publishing that began to reprint cheap newspaper comic strips in book-length collections. Soon amid growing debt, National merged with its distributor, the Independent News Company, in 1937. This led to the launch of a new periodical entitled *Detective Comics* (from which the company would later take its name, shortening Detective Comics to DC). Within a year National Allied was entirely owned by Independent News and during this transition, another new title, *Action Comics*, was launched.

With a cover date of June 1938, *Action Comics* #1 featured on its cover a human-looking, be-caped and tight-ed, alien strongman hoisting an automobile over his head. Within, this character, Superman, was featured in a series of very loosely linked heroic vignettes. Superman's young creators, writer Jerry Siegel and artist Joe Shuster, had been asked to quickly cut and paste together a collection of rejected newspaper strips featuring their hero into something loosely resembling an introductory story. In order to get paid and see their creation in print, they signed a standard work-for-hire contract, granting copyright ownership of their stories (and characters) to the company for a reported total sum of US $130 (Wright 2001: 7)[2]

In the unprecedented explosion of popularity that followed, Independent News added many additional comic book titles (including *Superman*) and formed another company, All American Comics. After World War II, as the popularity of comic books began to decline somewhat, All American Comics and Detective Comics merged to become National Comics. National Comics then merged with Independent News to become, finally, one corporate entity, National Periodical Publications. This name remained for the next 40 years, even though since 1940 the company has consistently used and been popularly known by the DC brand and circular logo on many of the comic books it has published[3] (Wright 2001: xix; Daniels 1995: 18).

In 1967 the parking lot/limousine/car rental/funeral parlor conglomerate, Kinney National Company, acquired National Periodical Publications. Two years later Kinney completed the acquisition of Warner Bros.-Seven Arts (Warner Bros. Pictures having been acquired, also in 1967, by distributor Seven Arts, Ltd), bringing Warner and Superman together within the same corporate structure for the first time.[4] Kinney spun off all its non-entertainment assets into the National Kinney Corporation and changed the name of the remaining media company to Warner Communications, Inc. in 1972 (Cook 2000: 307; Blumenthal and Goodenough 2006). *Superman: The Movie* (Richard Donner 1978) was soon put into the production schedule and eventually released by the film division of this new corporate entity, Warner Bros. Pictures. It was followed by three sequels and a spin-off centering on the character of Supergirl. Warner Communications, Inc. famously merged with publishing conglomerate Time, Inc. in 1989 to become Time-Warner. Time-Warner merged with America Online, Inc. to become AOL-Time-Warner in 2001. As that merger proved less successful than had been intended, the company again, at the time of this writing, calls itself Time Warner. The WB Television Network, meanwhile, went on the air January 11, 1995.

Thus on October 16, 2001, when the pilot episode of *Smallville* first aired on the WB, viewers witnessed what might seem the natural culmination of a long history of complex corporate mergers and brand management. Indeed, *Smallville* represented an extremely well-known brand (Superman) airing on a small but popular US television network (the WB) in the form of a program produced by a leading television production studio (Warner Bros. Television), all of which came about (mostly) under the same corporate entity, AOL-Time-Warner. This intra-corporate cooperation allowed for an unusually (especially by the young netlet's standards) high budget for the pilot (approximately US$8 million). Building on this history and cooperation, despite the large initial budget, as former WB entertainment executive Susanne Daniels recalls, "by all accounts, Warner Bros. Television never wavered in its faith that *Smallville* was worth the investment" (Daniels & Littleton 2007: 270). Nevertheless, given the wide involvement and considerable expense and leveraging of the valuable brand, even she concedes that "the stakes were high, just like a good Superman comic adventure" (Daniels & Littleton 2007: 270).

Perhaps also like a Superman comic adventure, it turns out there was nothing to fear. Our hero triumphed, with the resulting pilot earning the highest ratings for any debut in the history of the WB network. Thus

began a show that would survive even the end of its network[5] and continue to air for at least nine seasons. The benefits of media conglomeration did not begin nor end with the use of the Superman property to achieve the relative ratings success of *Smallville*.

Corporate Conglomeration

Smallville debuted during a transitional point – particularly in television – where recognizable brands were increasingly useful not merely for pre-selling a new product or iteration of that branded property, but were becoming increasingly in and of themselves the main point of cultural and creative production. By the late 1990s this so-called brand equity had become a source of corporate value in itself, particularly as the reliability of any one media outlet's (like television's) future continued to be uncertain. In this sense the Superman multimedia brand management has only been heightened from its already ambitious origins through a semi-coordinated multi-media brand deployment. The use of intellectual property – the managing of a brand – had just begun to take on new urgency given the transformations in the television industry. Owning a familiar property to deliver through the coordinated efforts of a media conglomerate lent a certain security considering the uncertain future of distribution.

Thus *Smallville*, as the latest iteration of Superman, was spread across multiple media, both to increase the show's popularity *and* to leverage it. Time Warner-owned *Entertainment Weekly*, for example, continued to cover and promote the program, soon dubbing it a "hit" program on its November 23, 2001 cover (Denison 2007: 169). *Smallville* continued the WB's practice of utilizing graphics at the end of each episode featuring the album cover from music used within that episode and a voice-over stating "Now available online, at TheWb.com."[6] Some episodes, meanwhile, actually included as part of their narrative, characters making music "mix" CDs, which were then released – extra-textually – through Time-Warner-owned Elektra records.[7] Corporate sibling DC Comics also benefited from the program's success, drawing the WB's young-skewing audience back to comic book reading (especially through the publication of *Smallville* comic books based on the television program) (Jones 2006). A host of additional *Smallville* ancillary products, from action figures to juvenile-fiction novels, continue to be produced by (or through) various divisions of Time Warner.

Corporate cooperation continued across different companies as well. By 2007, it was possible, online and via mobile telephony, to view "two-minute comic-like mini-episodes of 'Smallville,' created by various DC Comics artists" (Dominiak 2007: 12). This multi-media storytelling offered further forms of product integration for willing advertisers, as well, with unexplained clues from television episodes answered online, leading to more clues that could only be explained by entering a sponsor's website (e.g. Toyota or Sprint – both companies with extensive product placement within the program). Thus the success of *Smallville* has proven quite valuable to DC Comics, the WB, Warner Bros. Television and other divisions of Time Warner, as well as offering a site for experimentation in product placement and new forms of advertising amid a DVR-using, online, time-shifting world of audience activity.

For all that, *Smallville* has not been simply a textbook case of corporate conglomerate integration. *Smallville* became a program about Superman only after Warner Bros. Pictures was reported to have denied Warner Bros. Television the rights to use the Batman character. Warner Bros. Television, meanwhile, initiated bidding for *Smallville* between the Fox Network and the WB Network that led to its sibling division ultimately paying more per episode. When *Smallville* did debut – more than six years after the WB launched – it became only the second WB "signature show" actually produced by Warner Bros. Television.[8] This was the reality of the much vaunted (and feared) corporate "synergy," belying the largely self-serving myth of the monolithic – or even efficient – conglomerate.

Netlet Tweens

The WB was formed in the mid-1990s to add value to other Time-Warner holdings, particularly the highly successful Warner Bros. Television (producer of *Friends*, *ER*, etc.), by providing a reliable outlet for their productions amid deregulation (especially the rollback of Fin-Syn). That the WB was not yet performing this function by the turn of the century was actually something that programming a series like *Smallville* was to begin to remedy. For a program to sustain a profitable afterlife (in syndication, new media, etc.), it typically needs to initiate viewer investment in its initial run. This is most efficiently managed by airing for as long as possible to as many viewers as possible. A large, established network meets these requirements much more readily than does a fledgling netlet.

Smallville, in this context, was intended to draw on the intellectual property and cultural history of Superman while using the WB brand to build and expand the WB from the special audience of a netlet to the broad "mainstream" audience of a full-blown, legitimate network (and thus produce a more valuable site for distributing future Warner Bros. Television productions).

Smallville, therefore, recast Superman as an archetypal WB teen with the intent of recasting the WB teen for a new, broader, coalition audience. Drawing on the property and the character of Superman combined with the familiar genre expectations of the WB was designed to present a conflicted hero who could singularly embody the coalition of identities the netlet hoped to attract as its audience (female and male; young and old (er); action oriented and melodramatic), providing the WB with a coalition audience that looked much like a traditional broadcast network's "mass" audience.

Perhaps most substantially, for example, by effectively replacing the heroines of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Charmed* – even *Felicity* and *Gilmore Girls* – with a super-bodied white man, *Smallville* marked efforts to shift the WB's target composition of that coalition audience. As an interested trade press was reporting, "The AOL Time Warner-owned network hoped *Smallville* would hook males, but it didn't want to turn off its young female core audience" (Pendleton 2003: S–4). *Smallville*'s programming mission, in essence, was to maintain the netlet's valuable female audience while also attracting a new male audience. So far as Time Warner was concerned, the difference between a successful netlet and a "real" network was in attracting a "mainstream" audience to fully legitimate the network (to the industry, to advertisers, perhaps to viewers). To the extent that it began attracting more male viewers to the network, *Smallville* was largely successful.

Smallville's measured audience, for the pilot episode, consisted of approximately 8.4 million viewers. Reported in a flurry of category fetishes typical of the industry's understanding of its audience, these viewers included the best 18–49 demographic rating for any WB premiere and the largest adult 18–34, men 18–34, and men 18–49 demographic ratings for any episode of any series in the WB's history (Kissell 2001: 1; Johnson 2001: 6D). These men and "older" adults boded well for the series' usefulness in expanding the network's reach. By the second season, *Advertising Age* could note that of the average 7.5 million viewers each week, making it "the TV network's top-rated hit," *Smallville*'s "nearly 2 million

male viewers represent twice as many guys as any other show on the WB'' (Pendleton 2003: S–4). From this, the trade publication concurred with marketing co-president Bob Bibb, whom it quoted to conclude that ''By attracting men to *Smallville*, we opened up the network to a whole new demographic'' (Pendleton 2003: S–4).

By mid-March of 2003, the WB's typically 63 percent female audience was down to 60 percent while *Smallville* had become the netlet's highest-rated show ''in most categories'' and was only 51 percent female in it audience composition (Kissell 2003: 27). This was impressive, as industry wisdom was that ''to get young men to the screen, it takes a lot'' (quoted in Aurthur 2006: B9). After several years of ratings fluctuations, audiences averaged at just over 5 million. By the end of season 5, even after WB had moved *Smallville* to the highly competitive Thursday night, ratings continued to hold, and the *New York Times* (reasserting the television industry's received wisdom) was able to report that ''for the season [*Smallville*] was No. 1 in its time period among men aged 18 to 34, a hard-to-reach audience that would often rather play video games than watch television'' (quoted in Aurthur 2006: B9). Moreover, by the end of the season, *Smallville*'s competition was retreating: ''In the middle of the season Fox moved the *O.C.* time slot back an hour; ABC's *Alias* moved to Wednesdays'' (Aurthur 2006: B9). (Of course *Smallville* itself was something like a combination of these two shows.) *Smallville* was forming a coalition audience for a growing network even during a period of audience fragmentation.

In *Smallville*, the WB combined branded property, narrative history, and genre to expand its audience without losing its core or, for now, its identity. To the extent that such an effort was successful, however, the image of the WB would begin to change (it was hoped from netlet to network). At the same time, Superman's encounter with television in transition, the WB brand, and new genre expectations meant that this narrative character would not escape unscarred either.

Narrative Buildup

To achieve this success in maintaining the WB's audience while supplementing it with formerly uninterested male viewers, the WB developed a program with multiple textual appeals to different constituents of what would become a coalition of audiences that looked very much like a mass

audience. Rather than least objectionable programming, this was the considered blending of genres with different appeals into a single program, and articulated through a single heroic protagonist. Superman had to be made to accommodate the identity of a recognizable WB teen.

This meant that *Smallville* would not only contend with managing the value Superman had accrued as a property, but also the significant narrative and cultural history of Superman as a popular fictional character. Throughout the process of corporate mergers and changing ownership, the character of Superman also took a long, complex path of development before appearing on the WB as an angsty, repressed teen. *Smallville*, in other words, was contending with not only a complex and lengthy history of corporate ownership, but also an even more complex and just as lengthy fictional narrative legend in order to emerge with a recognizable and programmable Superman.

This history of Superman is both narrative and cultural. Narratively, only a small part of Superman's history is "backstory" – a history invented for a character by a writer – most of it has actually accrued over the seven decades and vast number of stories in which he has appeared. The backstory simply (if fantastically) explains his powers and his identity. Superman was born on the distant planet Krypton, but sent to Earth in infancy by his parents who realized that Krypton was about to be destroyed. On Earth, adopted by a Kansas farm couple, his alien origin meant that he developed extraordinary physical powers through exposure to our yellow sun while his conservative rural upbringing meant that he developed incorruptible "American values." Upon adulthood, Superman arrives in the city of Metropolis having lived the ultimate American narrative, as Scott Bukatman has astutely observed, as both "immigrant Kryptonian orphan *and* rural American: Superman comes to the city from both directions" (Bukatman 2003: 197).

Culturally, the notion of a superman predates the birth of Superman. As Gerard Jones notes, "the word had descended from Nietzche's *Ubermensch* through Bernard Shaw's *Man and Superman*, but it was easily wedded to ideas neither Nietzschean nor Shavian" (Jones 2004: 80). When Superman was born, he emerged from the lonely, depression-era imaginations of two Ohio sons of Jewish immigrants, Jerry Siegel who invented the character and wrote the stories and Joe Shuster who drew it. Inspired by multiple sources of often disreputable popular culture – from John Carter of Mars[9] to Bernarr MacFadden[10] – and inflecting their hero with adolescent fantasies of that era's version of the American dream,

Superman was, not coincidentally, simultaneously the ultimate alien immigrant and the ultimate American hero. The early comics offer a Superman character who seems to delight in his powers, exuberantly using them, if he deems necessary, even in opposition to police and state forces.[11] He is a gleeful vigilante, prone to violence and even occasionally killing his adversaries. However, as Andrae notes, even here, "unlike his predecessors, Superman is selflessly dedicated to the public good" (1980: 98). As opposed to earlier iterations of the superman idea, this one chose to exist within society, indeed defending it and its weakest members, resolutely refusing to use his powers for his own profit, and instead fighting for social justice in ways that suggest a progressive class-consciousness.[12] The children of Jewish immigrants in the 1930s had reimagined the horrific potential of a superior being as the ultimate American assimilation story.

In this guise, it is frequently noted, "Superman was the first character to fully embody the definition of the superhero and to prompt the imitation and repetition necessary for the emergence of a genre" (Peter Coogan 2006: 175). Almost immediately, Superman transcended his debut medium, the comic book. The McLure Syndicate reconsidered its previous rejection of the character as the center of a newspaper strip (1939), a nationally syndicated radio program expanded the adventures of Superman (1939–51), Paramount Studios released a series of well-regarded animated (by Fleischer studios) shorts featuring Superman in 1941 and 1943, "and Superman's licensed image sold a myriad of products ranging from toy 'Krypto-Rayguns' to, literally, sliced bread" (Wright 2001: 13–14). By 1948 Kirk Alyn was starring in Columbia Pictures' multi-part motion picture serial *Superman* and reprised his role for 1950s fifteen-part *Atom Man vs. Superman*. In 1951, a feature film starring George Reeves, *Superman and the Mole-Men* (Lee Sholem 1951), was made. Reeves continued the role in 104 episodes of the syndicated television series *The Adventures of Superman* (1951–7). Thus, "Superman also signaled the arrival of comic books as a spawning ground for characters that crossed media boundaries" (Fingeroth 2007: 72). Coinciding with the childhood of the US baby boom generation, "the epitome of the modern adolescent fantasy," as Bradford Wright simply summarizes, Superman became "the ideal that spawned an industry" (Wright 2001: 1).

Narratively, meanwhile, his success and multiplication across media did not render a static character simply showing up in different narratives. Instead the character, his personality, and his powers developed and

transformed over this lengthy and dispersed history. In *Action Comics* #1 the adult Clark Kent discovers that he can "easily leap 1/8th of a mile; hurdle a twenty-story building . . . raise tremendous weights . . . run faster than an express train . . . and that nothing less than a bursting shell could penetrate his skin" (Siegel & Shuster 1997: 11, original ellipses across multiple panels). These initial superpowers were augmented and accompanied by more as Superman traveled across time, space, and media. Various imaginative narrative predicaments saw Superman's strength grow nearly limitless while his skin – even his tights – would become completely invulnerable. By the 1950s Superman had gained the ability to fly (through air and outer-space), as well as both X-ray and heat vision, super breath, different responses to different colors of kryptonite and also Kryptonian relatives like Supergirl and erstwhile pet Superdog.

Through these same narrative and media travels, meanwhile, his political consciousness also transformed. In the mid-1950s, Superman stories began exploring themes of alienation and loneliness seemingly incumbent on a man who discovers he is not of this world but the last of his kind; his home planet, family, and entire people destroyed in his infancy. With a growing emphasis on his individual psychology rather than his contribution to social justice, Superman's backstory was elaborated and the specifics of Kryptonian civilization revealed (or invented). His diminished attention to social justice, meanwhile, meant that this era's Superman, as Umberto Eco has noted, had a civic rather than a political conscience (1972). Following narrative conventions associated with both comic books and Hollywood films, social evil in Superman stories of this period is transmuted into personal evil. Rather than fighting systemic corruption as he had in early comics, Superman fought mad-scientists and powerful aliens. Superman, as a (fictional) citizen of post-War America, is thoroughly incorporated into the establishment, resulting in the character's association with Boyscouty, do-goodery, or as Andrae puts it, he became "a vapid, establishmentarian hero" (Andrae 1980: 102).

It is this characterization of Superman that inhabits television in *The Adventures of Superman*, the Saturday morning cartoons that followed, comic books and strips, as well as feature films *Superman: The Movie* and its sequels (if here with a dollop of irony chastened by nostalgia). It is this version of Superman that is brutally and derisively contrasted with Batman's extra-legal vigilantism in Frank Miller's influential proto-fascist *The Dark Knight Returns* series featuring Superman as the stooge of a corrupt, cold-war federal government (Frank Miller, with Klaus Janson and Lynn

Varley 1986). As Miller has elsewhere suggested about this transmutation, "Go back to the origins of Superman, before World War II. He was dragging generals to the front of the battles. He was fighting corrupt landlords. He was *not* the symbol of the status quo he's since become" (Miller quoted in Somigli 1998: 289).

Thus much of Superman's significant narrative background is composed not of invented backstory, but actual (back issue) stories, distributed across media and over the decades. But this has rarely been a coordinated trans-media experience typical of current programming and marketing efforts. Instead, by the start of the twenty-first century, these decades worth of intertextual, referential buildup meant that starting a new story featuring Superman involved a great deal more than starting with a blank screen. Superman had been reinvented, his origins retold and reimagined, and his stories replayed for nearly seven decades in all manner of narrative forms. Superman stories came overdetermined in expectations, ideologies, and narratives built on a world-recognizable symbol and character. Before the first words of the first script could be typed for *Smallville*, they came pre-laden in meaning, but also contradiction, confusion, and expectation.

One way to understand this, as Jane Gaines argues, is that "Superman may be seen as one long intertext made up of all the narratives, reviews, and biographies laid end to end." She suggests that "In this configuration, each story does not necessarily start from a virtual beginning, but it instead is written onto as well as over the earlier story, creating a *paradigmatic narrative buildup*" (Gaines 1991: 215, emphasis added). At the same time, unlike carefully coordinated trans-media efforts, however, Superman has rarely been exactly the same character when encountered in different media, or even interpreted through different authors, artists, and actors. As Gaines continues, there is another explanation of "the Superman phenomenon that would see the character as material that is significantly altered as [it/he] is cast in different media. From this vantage, Superman does not necessarily carry his narrative scheme with him like a genetic map. The character can always be rewritten for another medium"[13] (Gaines 1991: 216). In practice some combination of these two options tends to obtain. While indeed quite different iterations located in different media seem to comfortably coexist at various points in the character's history, some of the significant changes to the character found in one iteration of Superman have nevertheless carried over into later versions and different adaptations. For example, it has been widely observed that characters like Clark's journalism colleagues Perry White and Jimmy Olsen, as well as

inventions such as Superman's Achilles heel, kryptonite, were introduced in the radio show (at a time when Siegel and Shuster worked only on the comic book and comic strip). These were subsequently incorporated into the comics and other iterations of the character. Noting this model of multi-media revisionism, Terrence Wandtke suggests that "These subsequent additions made outside the medium that gave birth to the superhero were seen as essential to the original conception of Superman in years to come, now represented as an essential part of the Superman canon (inside and outside his comic book renderings)" (2007: 13).

Superman's travels through time, space, and media have allowed him to accrue familiarity and value. As one recent trade journal article has noted, just since the 1980s, "among other appearances he's been a four-time [now five-time] movie star, a pillar of its [Time Warner's] DC Comics publishing arm, a merchandising, licensing and animation godsend and, most recently, the center of WB's hit show *Smallville* . . . Superman properties have already earned more than [US]$1.7 billion" (Stanley 2006: cover). As Denison simply puts it, "Superman enjoys one of the largest intertextual franchises in the history of popular culture, and is also one of the most insistently multimedia of icons" (Denison 2007: 160). Consider, as just one example, the medium of television: after Christopher Reeve gave up the part following the feature film *Superman IV: The Quest for Peace* (Sidney J. Furie 1987), Superman has been a consistent presence on series television. The syndicated series *Superboy* detailing Clark Kent's college years (in Florida!) ran from 1988 to 1991. ABC ran *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman* from 1993 through 1997, in which Superman and Lois Lane eventually marry and Lex Luthor is killed. This is not to mention *Superman: The Animated Series* (1996–2000) and other Saturday morning, Kid's WB afternoon, and syndicated animated programs featuring Superman either on his own, teamed with Batman, or as part of the Justice League of America during this same era. Prominent American Express commercials aired (and were available for viewing online) beginning in 1998, featuring the live-action teaming of comedian Jerry Seinfeld (who frequently admiringly referenced Superman in his 1990s sitcom) with an animated (Curt Swan-inspired) Superman. *Smallville* then debuted on the WB in 2001.

Such significant paradigmatic narrative buildup comes with its own burdens as the character and his story acquire potentially unmanageable cultural significance and multiple meanings, possibly impugning the reception of new iterations. This was no doubt the impulse behind the

1986 DC Comics attempt to "reboot" the character of Superman, with publications such as *Superman: Whatever Happened to the Man of Tomorrow* followed by John Byrne's *The Man of Steel* series. Superman's powers were reduced, his origin story streamlined, his adoptive parents both still alive, and his nemesis, Lex Luthor, transformed from mad scientist into nefarious billionaire industrialist. These were efforts to simplify and reduce – by redaction, as it were – his complex narrative buildup. Perhaps most significant in this reboot was the emphasis on Clark Kent – now more assertive – as the real character and Superman as merely his disguise. Since this reboot the comic books have seen Superman die, be mysteriously reborn, married to Lois Lane, and more recently, entertained the suggestion of yet another reboot of the character's narrative buildup. But such substantial and continuing buildup is difficult to dismiss or conveniently reboot, simply because the copyright holder wishes to streamline its property. And this property – as cultural and narrative character, not simply copyright – exists in excess of strict corporate controls, continually accruing additional buildup not only through his trademark-maintaining presence across multiple media but also in unauthorized, unscripted, and unaccountable uses by fans, detractors, viewers, and cultural citizens.

Superman's textual travels across media, through time, and in common culture, threaten to diminish the integrity of his identity and overwhelm additional iterations. Wandtke, for example, claims that "the superhero is reinscribed by different authors in different mediums so that the superhero becomes endlessly multiple with an identity that is quintessentially postmodern" (2007: 14). Such brand and character ubiquity, however, can threaten both the character's meaning and the brand's mobility and trademark maintenance. It threatens to overwhelm the mechanisms in place to regulate ownership and control expressions, uses and meanings of the character and property, potentially confusing the identity of the character and undermining the value of the branded property. Wandtke goes on to argue that while this combination of property and character "results in part from media conglomerates striving to keep their properties consistent and yet relevant, the superheroes exist only partially within the control of companies that own them" (2007: 15). At the same time, such ubiquity is a necessary risk as it is actually what can be leveraged through ownership of a branded property, not only deriving value from the brand equity, but also renewing that value. As Luca Somigli proposes, "the development of the narrative over time in subsequent retellings and rearticulations does not

entail a suspension of meaning, a sort of continuous oblivion, as [Umberto] Eco seems to imply, but works more effectively the more the audience is aware of the previous articulation of the narrative that each retelling extends *and* remakes'' (Somigli 1998: 288). Fidelity to the prior material can be important for reasons both legal and of coherence, but it is not in itself the point. The point is how well each new iteration succeeds as a variation on continually developing, but legally manageable, themes. Thus the character is a matter of accumulation of details, lacking a single urtext (Wandtke 2007: 13), a transmedia text prior to the invention of that term or its now carefully managed practice.

Therefore, from Time Warner's perspective, in the case of *Smallville*, as the president and publisher of DC Comics Paul Levitz put it, ''anything that introduces new generations of people to our characters has to be good for us. There's a lot of people who love Clark Kent and Lex Luthor who didn't four or five years ago, and we think they'll be fans for generations to come the same way those who saw the George Reeves show way back when did'' (McLean 2006: B4). *Superman Returns* (2006) director Brian Singer has, in light of this history, suggested that when it comes to Superman, it ''has to look and sound as though he's stepped out of your collective memory'' (Singer quoted in Yockey 2008: 32). This would be *Smallville*'s point of departure and ultimately its narrative and institutional strategy. As he must, Superman builds on his lengthy narrative buildup, but also starts all over again – often with some difference – in each new iteration. In this context, even the largely autonomous iteration of the theatrically released *Superman Returns*, therefore, launched with an effectively redundant title.

WB-ifying Superman: No Flights, No Tights

> In the film, Superman is the character and Clark Kent is the disguise, and you know, in our show Clark Kent is the character and ultimately, down the road, Superman will be the disguise . . . it's a different take on the same material. (Alfred Gough quoted in Denison 2007: 176)

In the case of *Smallville*, the WB was not only confronting this lengthy, twinned history of valuable property and familiar character, but indeed was intent on leveraging the histories of Superman even while reinventing the character (again) as a typical WB teen. *Smallville* set out to capitalize on the Superman property even as – with yet another iteration – the

character's meaning (and thus value) threatened to further attenuate. How, as *Daily Variety* once fretted, was *Smallville* going to leap tall buildings without jumping the shark? (Lowry 2003).

Counterintuitively, *Smallville* confronted Superman's considerable narrative buildup and established iconic meanings by locating its narrative temporally prior to Superman's existence. Instead of the familiar blue tights and red cape, shooting through the air to save the day, *Smallville* focused on the coming-of-age story of a Midwestern teen only starting to learn of his ultimate destiny as a superhero. This strategy was summarized by the production's famous on-set mantra of "No Flights, No Tights."

This meant the latest iteration of Time Warner's Superman property would systematically avoid use of the actually trademarked properties of Superman so valuable to Time Warner. Former WB executive Susanne Daniels recalls that "Executives at the DC Comics division were angry about those decisions at first. In their view, the TV studio was graciously granted access to the original superhero, and yet it was trying to downplay all of the elements that made him, well, super" (Daniels and Littleton 2007: 237–8). Early promotion for the program, however, suggested how valuable such a strategy might be, offering a combination of genres potentially appealing to different audience fragments and a coy game of anticipation and deferral for those already familiar with Superman's narrative buildup. WB marketing focused on a promotions "campaign that showed a cute boy who's tormented by his high school peers and has a deep, dark secret. There were a few glimpses of Superman iconography – a flash of glowing green kryptonite, an 'S' on a shirt – but there were no loud costumes and no mention of the S-word. It was an anti-Superman Superman campaign" (Hibbard 2003: 19). Thus selectively utilized and revealed, Superman's accumulated narrative buildup might be very well suited for the WB core audience. It is only a small move, after all, to take Clark Kent's "powerlessness, alienation, and inauthenticity" (Andrae 1980: 102) and reframe them from symptoms of status frustration to a self-serving diagnosis of the white-bread American male teen.

Situating the iconic character perfectly amid other WB programming, it was as if producers literally applied Richard Reynolds diagnosis that "Superman has often been curtly dismissed as an adolescent fantasy of omnipotence. On closer inspection, a diametrically opposed reading emerges; Superman is all about powerlessness. Time and again, Superman's great physical powers are useless when set against the trickery, deceit and immorality of his enemies – most of all, Luthor" (Reynolds 1992: 66).

This fluctuation between omnipotence and powerlessness animates the series' narrative while offering an allegory uniquely flattering to the network's mostly youthful viewers. *Smallville* plays on Superman's status as a superior (but not yet perfect) being walking among mortals, disguised as one of us, and turns it into a flattering (and at times nostalgic) teen fantasy.

While one impetus for such stories of powerlessness may derive from the need to create narrative drama and tension around a character who is virtually invulnerable with nearly unlimited physical power, *Smallville* emphasizes this curious, apparent paradox, by putting narrative focus on a teen who is not yet Superman, placing it in new relationship to the narrative buildup that preceded it while still drawing heavily on aspects of the buildup.[14] This situated the show very well amid WB's signature programming, as one early review noted, ''The show, on WB, is an odd mix of imitation and innovation. It has the otherwordly overtones of 'Roswell' and the good-versus-evil themes of 'Buffy the Vampire Slayer,' applying their formulas rather blatantly.'' Yet for the overall concept, the creators, Alfred Gough and Miles Millar, blazed their own trail. ''It's the Superman story, all right, but with characters transplanted, made over, fleshed out with back stories. The enjoyment is in seeing how the familiar names turn up'' (Genzlinger 2001: E7). Superman not only vanquishes villainy and saves the day, he also argues with his parents, harbors a schoolboy crush on the girl next door, learns moral and ethical lessons, and of course develops his latent powers. Clark Kent's story – narrated now through a combination of these (and other) genres – comes to singularly embody a coalition of the aspirations of the different demographic groups the WB was seeking to attract. It offered this audience a combination of imitation and innovation, anticipation and deferral.

Once the program began to air on the WB, co-head writer Alfred Gough recalls ''We never got notes (from the network) saying, 'This is going to be boring because everybody already knows Clark Kent.' What we found is that most of the audience that watch the WB were not familiar with Superman at all'' (quoted in Morfoot 2005: A6). Production industry lore was soon filled with stories such as ''We did a pilot test and in the middle there was a glitch in the tape and the boys had to tell the girls they were watching Superman. The girls had no idea'' (Gough quoted, in Morfoot 2005: A6). This, again, was not accidental. In fact whatever Superman's cultural capital as a brand, the WB's primary audience – additional research indicated – was either unaware or antagonistic:

"teens – particularly girls – did not like Superman, did not think he was cool, and did not want to watch a show about him" (Hibbard 2003: 19). Even WB entertainment executive Daniels recalls that upon first hearing the idea of *Smallville*, her reaction was incredulous: "*Super*-man! Don't you think Superman is over? [. . .] Really? Can Superman possibly be hip again?" (Daniels 1995: 235). *Advertising Age*, meanwhile, reported that "In focus groups, the WB's co-presidents of marketing – Bob Bibb, 46, and Lewis Goldstein, 50 – learned that contemporary youth saw the square-jawed Clark Kent/Superman as an insipid Goody Two-Shoes" (Pendleton 2003: S–4).

Those involved in the production of the program were sympathetic to this perspective. Miles Millar, for example, felt that in most of the narrative buildup, "We've never seen Clark Kent as a real person – let's get to the heart of Clark Kent. You have teen alienation. He's a freak. It's puberty with superpowers." Thus the trademarked emblems of the character, the tights, the cape, his flying, would only detract from this telling of Superman's origin, this use of character and branded property. Alfred Gough suggested in several publicity interviews, "It's difficult to sympathize and really connect to someone who is wearing underpants over his tights." Or, as former *Dukes of Hazzard* star John Schneider, cast to play Clark Kent's adoptive father, put it: "I think it's clear in the pilot [episode] that we're not dealing with Superman as a teenager, we are really in effect dealing with a special needs child" (quoted in Brioux 2001).

Such pathologizing is perhaps warranted, given *Smallville*'s focus on Clark Kent's "emotional development as a young man, and one with incredible responsibility to bear" (Daniels and Littleton 2007: 237–8). More to the point, however, is the way these textual choices link audience attention to experiments in televisual temporality. *Smallville* presents Superman, *before* he was either very super or yet a man. Daniels recalls the careful scrutiny of textual decisions involved in "how to play it to avoid any whiff of cheesiness, and how to slowly unravel the Clark Kent story in a way that made a coming-of-age allegory that would resonate with our audience" (Daniels and Littleton 2007: 238). Again, palatability is linked to temporality. The resulting program therefore sustained a temporally complex retelling of Superman's origins, drawing on Superman's considerable narrative buildup selectively, unveiling it gradually, and updating it intermittently (all not only without repelling, but indeed intriguing, those who did not like Superman in the first place). As Daniels concluded: "The show would employ some but not all of the Superman mythos, and most

of what was used was tweaked perfectly for the 21st century'' (Daniels and Littleton 2007: 238–9). The Superman property was deployed with a combination of narrative buildup, innovation, and genre mixing intended to offer a careful balance of textual appeals: some for those who were seeking action-packed superhero, some for those who disliked Superman's accumulated narrative. This strategy was used to compensate for potential attenuation through yet another iteration while attracting a composite audience through these different appeals, imitation and innovation, anticipation and deferral.

Aspirational Teen Angst

> I remember watching the Superman movies. You never go, 'Hey, Lex Luthor! I'd like to play that guy! (Michael Rosenbaum[15])

Smallville's pilot episode premiered on the WB October 16, 2001 with an initial five-minute sequence featuring an extended depiction of the eponymous Kansas town graphically destroyed amid a fiery meteor shower wherein three-year-old Lana Lang witnesses her parents' incineration. Airing only a month after September 11, 2001, the series' nostalgic, small-town-Kansas setting, potentially Christian symbolism, apparently simple values, general corniness, and emerging super heroics took on new significance. Noting that the timing of the premiere was not premeditated, one critic nevertheless suggested that the ''show could hardly have been better timed to appeal to the fantasy life of the nation. We could get some major mileage right now from a Man of Steel, especially one who has traditionally patrolled the skies to defend Truth, Justice, and the American Way'' (Rosett 2001: A19). *Rolling Stone* suggested that this version of Superman, appearing how and when it did, led to ''a number of highbrow types [who] have praised the show for its 'soul' and its 'intuitive feel for the zeitgeist,' and sensed in this particular Clark Kent a new kind of hero for the post-9/11 world'' (Hedegaard 2002: 43; see also Hinson 2002).

Such responses have led Cary Jones to declare that TV critics were participating in ''the fundamental aspects of the Superman myth welcomed by post-9/11 media eager to heap praise on figures associated with US patriotism'' (Jones 2006). For Jones, Superman's narrative buildup signified a particular kind of American moralism ''traditionally attributed to his small town, nuclear family upbringing, and *Smallville*

takes this idea as a narrative backbone in the tradition of family-oriented WB programming'' (Jones 2006). The Kent family farm, invariably shot as Rockwellian, bathed in warm, glowing magic-hour light, is home to reliable, honest, upright parents and visited by loyal friends. Even the casting recalls rural simplicity, perhaps emphasized by former *Dukes of Hazzard* star John Schneider playing Clark's adoptive father, Jonathan Kent, as a fiercely tempered, moral absolutist. Amid this new politico-cultural context, a Midwestern teenaged Superman on the WB came off as a nostalgic *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* meets *7th Heaven* and was, as such, perfectly (if unintentionally) timed to capitalize on national trauma.

Smallville was conceived, written, and filmed in the institutional context of television in transition, well before the events of Autumn 2001. As heir to the WB's *Buffy*, however, it had been preparing to replace the hip young SoCal woman with a repressed Midwestern boy for some time.[16] The myth of Superman – drawn from his accumulated narrative buildup – would emerge recentered – both the cause and the focus of violent trauma. The meteor shower that introduces this new narrative iteration at once devastates a town and its residents and signals the textual arrival of Superman. By violently infecting the Kansas geography with kryptonite (meteor rock), Clark's arrival becomes both a source of (survivor's) guilt and (''meteor-infected'') new enemies, in perfect (if unintended) accord with the concurrently unfurling televisual discourse about national trauma. This new iteration of Superman – teen, vulnerable, victimized, inhabiting a frequently wounded body – attempts to produce a Clark Kent who is both object and subject, victim and hero, threatened and omnipotent, so that there is little opportunity (or reason) to focus on anyone else. Rather than sending Superman to solve *our* problems, *Smallville* was asking us to invest in *his* problems.[17]

Well before the first episode's traumatic heartland destruction was broadcast, the program's pre-launch publicity campaign featured billboard and magazine promotions highlighting a scene from the pilot episode in which a shirtless Clark Kent (played by 24-year-old-model Tom Welling[18]) is tied to a cross in a cornfield, a blood-red ''S'' (for *S*mallville High, it turns out) painted on his chest. This image was derived from a sequence in the pilot in which each year during Smallville's homecoming, a prank is performed by the jocks on a freshman who is chosen to be that year's ''scarecrow'' (the Smallville High mascot is a crow). Wearing Lana Lang's kryptonite necklace (taken from the meteor she watched kill her parents), Lana's boyfriend, Whitney, senses a rival and chooses Clark as this year's

scarecrow. While cryptically hinting at Superman iconography (the enigmatic red "S"), Clark's pose presents the male body in pain. Tied to a cornfield's scarecrow support, the image suggests both crucifixion and lynching. This powerful image also drew attention to *Smallville*'s representation of Clark's difference through an unfortunate but striking similarity to the painful images of the (then) recent 1998 homophobic hate-crime murder in which 21-year-old Matthew Shepard was left for dead, strapped to a fence in rural Wyoming.[19] As one early review noted, "you can't find a stronger image of Superman as victim rather than hero" (Oxman 2001).

Mere weeks after September 11, 2001, Superman (Superman!) is graphically presented with the possibility of his own demise and the diminishing claim to universal signification as hero. Rendered surprisingly vulnerable, his death is deferred by none other than future foe Lex Luthor, who releases him from his bindings and befriends him.[20] Here was a hero that would not alienate WB viewers. This was how to generate sympathy for a nearly invulnerable, insipid goody two-shoes. Negotiating a sense of heroic masculine identity without undoing the effect of such a beginning has propelled Clark through a series of heightened, but reassuringly familiar anxieties. In that same opening episode, after all, this super-powered teen tells his parents "all I want to do is go through high school without being a total loser" ("Pilot" episode 1, season 1). His emerging super powers, however, are presented as a source of anxiety: marking his difference, magnifying the burden of his responsibilities, causing him to keep his true identity a secret from his friends. Nevertheless, more than one review was unimpressed by his predicament, "pity the boy who can leap tall buildings in a single bound – he's not popular!" (Oxman 2001). If the program tended to focus on a more pedestrian angst, it nonetheless rehearsed the daily humiliations and victimizations attended upon even the hero's body.

Repetition and Difference: Genres

This teen angst plays itself out – indeed may be considered a result of Clark's travel – across multiple episodes, each incorporating multiple components of popular genres. As *Daily Variety* suggests, "At various moments, 'Smallville' is an action hour, sci-fi romp, teen soap, family drama and rethinking of comicbook mythology – often all within the

same episode'' (Lowry 2006: B6). For Louisa Stein, *Smallville*'s genres include ''the apocalyptic, superheroic, and fantastic'' combined in a way that ''cannot be easily separated into their component parts'' and should therefore be thought of as ''transgeneric'' (Stein 2005: 12). Rayna Denison suggests that ''the intention seems to be to tap into two separate markets: one for teen narratives and the other for mystery, tinged by horror'' (Denison 2007: 170). Alfred Gough notes that the writing staff was culled from different, popular television genres. ''We have a mixture of people. There's people who have written for *X-Files* and *Dark Angel*, and then people who have written for *Sex and the City*'' (Produxion.com 2001). A typical episode might therefore intertwine teen romance, domestic melodrama, science-fiction, and action genres.

This very combination of generic appeals renders the heroic center, Clark Kent, in discernibly new forms. No longer simply an action hero, he is also a sensitive young man with identity issues, a teen-romantic figure, an alien from a distant planet, and the object of multiple affections. Such new forms threaten to further attenuate the meaning of this new iteration of Superman. This is the price paid for the multiple appeals the show makes in order to generate a composite audience.

In effect, then, as with *Highlander*, this transgenericism amounts to simultaneous efforts to appeal to and attract different demographic aspects of the television (and now the multimedia) audience. As *Daily Variety* observed on the occasion of *Smallville*'s one hundredth episode, ''part of the show's durability stems from its playing on multiple levels to different constituencies'' (Lowry 2006: B6). *Smallville*, navigating Superman's build-up as both character and property through a combination of multiple genres worked to leverage familiarity without wearing out its welcome, providing limited difference and nostalgic familiarity, offering Superman to more viewers without attenuating his meaning.

Such a strategy continued, perhaps past the point of reasonable deferral as *Smallville* has moved, in its later seasons, beyond the teen's desire to fit in and explore his hidden potential and into a way of addressing these concerns precisely by making them the center of the character's conflict. The source of Clark's fretting has shifted from trying to fit in to figuring out his identity and embracing his ultimate destiny. Identity remains the source of angst, now derived from a sense of responsibility in difference. Clark feels the need to protect loved ones not only from external threats, but from himself as well. The super white male is offered *as* difference; images of his vulnerability and objectification offered within narratives of

alienation place Clark firmly at the center of stories about difference and negotiated identity, fighting off attacks from all sides. For Miranda Banks such a combination signals a new character type for primetime television, "the beautiful, self-sacrificing, yet resilient hero" (Banks 2004: 17–18). As opposed to the cosmopolitan world-weariness signaled by Duncan MacLeod in *Highlander*, characters like Clark come across as "beautiful in their innocence, tragic in their struggle for goodness in the world, these melodramatic heroes are more human than human. Both victim and savior, these boys in fulfilling their destinies become enlightened heroes that are somehow more attractive to contemporary audiences" (Banks 2004: 26–7). Clark Kent, in *Smallville*, becomes a new type of hero, perfectly designed for "the teen male melodrama" (Banks 2004: 17). More than that, what allows "these boys" to play as "somehow more attractive to contemporary audiences," is that Clark becomes a hero formed from a long history of both narrative and property, designed for a coalition audience in the twenty-first century, and, perhaps tellingly, reluctant to embrace a destiny already known by everyone. This reluctant but inevitable Superman is grasping at immortality by deferring his own mythology.

Anticipation & Deferral

JESSE: Whoa. Who is the major hottie in primary colors?
LANA: Uh, that's Clark Kent
("Red" *Smallville* season 2, episode 4, originally aired October 15, 2002)

A textual strategy of anticipation and deferral is implicit in the production mantra of "no flights, no tights": the mantra itself instructs not to expect Superman per se, even while reminding precisely of nothing other than those most iconic signifiers of Superman. This is how *Smallville* manages accumulated narrative buildup and the threat of attenuation, by signaling both while offering neither. This is also how *Smallville* gets to appeal to both Superman fans and viewers who do not like Superman, by being both about and not about Superman. Most episodes feature plentiful intertextual references to tease viewers with anticipation of a Superman whose final arrival is always deferred. The first season episode "Crush," for example, begins with Clark Kent at his high school's career fair, reacting to a deep,

male voice telling him, ''I see you in a uniform, flying!'' After a beat: ''Have you considered a career in the Air Force?'' (Clark declines). Similarly, the Pilot finds Clark with a copy of the portable Nietzsche, but when asked by Lana Lang, who notices his book, ''So what are you, man or superman?'' He demurs, ''I haven't figured it out yet'' (''Pilot'' episode #1). Visually, the ''S'' insignia from Superman's costume makes multiple, fleeting, ultimately false appearances throughout the series. Viewers with even a passing familiarity with the superhero are thus rewarded for knowing more than the characters in such moments. Anticipation of the characters' destinies is accordingly heightened, even while the iconicity of the property and the role of the paradigmatic narrative buildup becomes increasingly ambiguous.

Even relatively casual notice of the program's production design and costuming demonstrates the extent to which the program is invested in this play of anticipation and deferral. For example, the Smallville High mascot is a crow wearing a red cape with an ''S'' on its chest. Throughout the series, Clark wears plain blue t-shirts under an unzipped red jacket with suspicious regularity. This consistent color-based iconography mimics Superman's iconic blue tights and red cape costume.

Indeed, the program's entire color palette is self-consciously designed to play on subtle acknowledgment of the characters' origins. Throughout the program, the design is marked by bold, striking, primary colors (including the iconic reds, yellows, blues) in costumes, sets, locations, and lighting. The ''four color process'' of color comic book printing, Scott McCloud reminds, defined the look of newsprint comic books for generations. ''The look of these colors, held by bold, simple outlines, and reproduced on cheap newsprint eventually became the look of comics in America'' (McCloud 1993: 187). It is this look that Clark's costuming, but also the interiors of frequent sets, such as Smallville's hospital and the Talon coffee house, recall. Originally, this was done ''To counteract the dulling effects of newsprint and to stand out from the competition, [therefore] costumed heroes were clad in bright, primary colors and fought in a bright primary world'' (McCloud 1993: 188). Certainly *Smallville*'s set design offers the viewer a supersaturated bright primary world, but *Smallville*'s use of color evokes intertextual referencing and subtle anticipation of future events depicted in those intertexts that the program itself promises ultimately never to show (only tease). As McCloud notes – and the production design of *Smallville* confirms – ''Because costume colors remained exactly the same, panel after panel, they came to symbolize

characters in the mind of the reader'' and they were ''fixed with a new iconic power'' (McCloud 1993: 188). *Smallville*'s color design is so apparent and significant a part of the show that it has become a point of self-referential dialogue. By season 7, Chloe, upon meeting an uncostumed Supergirl, need only remark, ''I should have known you were Clark's cousin from all the primary colors'' (''Kara'' *Smallville* season 7, episode 2 originally aired October 4, 2007).

Apart from the visual look of the program, casting has played a part in this referential cycle of anticipation and deferral, as Clark's mom, Martha, is played by Annette O'Toole, who played Superman's High School sweetheart, Lana Lang in *Superman III* (Richard Lester 1983). The former Kryptonian villain General Zod,[21] Terence Stamp, appears now as the disembodied voice of Clark's Kryptonian father, Jor-El. Also appearing, if less Oedipally, in various seasons have been former supermen Christopher Reeve and Dean Cain[22] and former Lois Lane Margot Kidder. Beyond intertextually clever stunt casting, each of these actors builds anticipation by recalling Superman in flight and in tights, only to defer that anticipation as the actors play different parts and Clark does not yet become Superman.

Similarly, characters also figure in this strategy of leveraging the familiar through anticipation and deferral. Characters from Lois Lane to Jimmy Olsen and Perry White have made appearances or become recurring characters. Young versions of superheroes like Aquaman, Green Arrow, Cyborg and the Flash appear. It might be pointed out that Martian Manhunter, Bizzaro, and Supergirl are, unlike Clark, even allowed to fly.

More obscurely, the Smallville High school newspaper so central to the early seasons is called *The Torch*, also the name of the school paper at Glenville High School in Cleveland where Superman creators Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster first met (Jones 2004: 63). The pilot channels Richard Donner's *Superman: The Movie* several times, reinventing Martha and Jonathan Kent's iconic discovery of a super-toddler amid crashed spaceship wreckage (''You found us, Clark'') and reminding us of that film's successful tagline when Lex asks Clark, ''do you believe a man can fly?''

As Miles Millar has suggested, ''The interesting thing about the series is you know how it's going to end'' (quoted in Schneider 2001: A19). Drawing on television's increasing penchant for episodic seriality, the show is constantly *reminding* us of how things will end up, but then deferring that conclusion for *this* episode, today. The extreme version of this is most notable in those episodes where the mantra is broken.

As Andrae has noted regarding the tension between Superman as character (who must live and develop) and property (who must remain unchanged), "the solution the authors [usually of comic books] have devised to depict change in an essentially static universe is to invent 'imaginary tales,' stories which describe possible developments which do not actually take place but occur in an imaginary time-frame" (Andrae 1980: 107). *Smallville* offers versions of this textual strategy, although with rare exceptions the imaginary is limited to sequences rather than entire "what-if" episodes. Perhaps more significantly, they also do not present strictly imaginary developments, they instead demonstrate what we already know *will* happen (just not yet, not now while we're watching). For example, nearly once a season Clark is shown apparently breaking half the program's mantra and actually flying. However, each time Clark flies it turns out he is actually dreaming,[23] fantasizing,[24] in an alternate reality, possessed,[25] or, much like the Superman of earliest *Action Comics* and animated shorts, simply jumping really high.[26] Here a highly anticipated, iconic event is granted, only to be taken away and again deferred. So Clark "actually" flying is always deferred, but viewers get to anticipate the moment he does by seeing what it will look like. Such moments are frequently incorporated into the opening credit sequence without narrative context for future viewing (although even in these sequences he does not wear tights[27]).

Genre matters here: these moments of fantastic hesitation between intertextual anticipation and deferral are made textually possible through the show's relationship to science fiction and fantasy genres. At the same time, there are significant moments of anticipation and deferral made possible through the program's use of the teen romance and domestic melodrama genres. The various romantic triangles between Clark, Chloe, and Lana; Clark, Lana, and Lois, and most significantly, Clark, Lana, and Lex, are drawn out over multiple seasons, anticipated and then deferred: "We waited five years for [Clark] to lose his virginity," Millar has stated. "Most shows do it in Episode 12" (Aurthur 2006: 9).[28] This narrative tension between anticipation and deferral draws on teen romance as well as melodramatic genre traits, but places *Smallville* within the narrative buildup of the Superman text. Viewers anticipate Clark's eventual love for Lois as well as his mutual antagonism with Lex.[29] Millar after all, knows that we all know how the narrative will end: "Badly! It's a tragedy – he doesn't end up with Lana, and he and Lex are mortal enemies. How is that good?" (quoted in Aurthur 2006: 9). Like many of the action heroes populating twenty-first century television screens, then, the longer Clark

endures, the greater his growing melancholy. Whether it is the anticipation of becoming Superman or the indefinite deferral of that destiny that has got him down, Clark's temporal transcendence is presented as exacting a toll.

Smallville operationalizes anticipation and deferral not only through familiar genre tropes and expectations, but also through its narrative structures. The program's episodic seriality demonstrates television in transition's negotiation of the distinction between property and character that Umberto Eco has suggested means the difference between the mythic and the novel. Eco's distinction can be thought of as the distinction between a reusable, branded property that must be sustained and a living (if fictional) character who must develop and therefore ultimately die. That Superman is simultaneously both, complicates an understanding of what Superman is and what Superman means. As Eco describes this distinction, in myth the hero is "seen as someone who has a story, and this story would characterize his divine features" while in the novel "the event has not happened *before* the story; it happens *while* it is being told" and our interest is directed to "what will happen" (Eco 1972: 15). The thrust of Eco's point in making this distinction is that popular cultural deployments of myths such as Superman prohibit progressive political thought by encouraging audiences to constantly return to a virtual starting point, over and over, with each repetition of the popular story. The very nature of Superman's powers, Eco suggests, necessitates that each story in which he figures is a "virtual new beginning." Superman never progresses, he never moves *toward* anything. As Andrae summarizes, Eco suggests that "Superman stories take place in an oneiric climate in which there is little connection between present, past and future. That narrative picks up strands of events without connecting them to previous or future actions. Consequently, the stories take place in a perpetual present which excludes all notion of change and development" (1980: 107) resulting in what Andrae describes as the substitution of "mythic repetition for historical development" (Andrae 1980: 109) and Jane Gaines suggests can be viewed as the "political paralysis of the Superman format" that "binds us to a 'continuum' and a 'repetition' rather than orienting us toward a future we can create" (Gaines 1991: 221).

The politics of narrative novelty notwithstanding, *Smallville* brokers this conundrum by taking place *before* the myth. Through its particular use (given the history of Superman as a property combined with the extensive paradigmatic narrative buildup), of the increasingly common television practice of blending series and serial structure, *Smallville* offers both the

myth and the novel. Clark does progress, he does move toward *something*, but rather than being consumed toward death he bumps against the limits of his own myth. Each episode of *Smallville* contains a "meteor freak" of the week (or other villain) who must be vanquished to return the world of Smallville (and of *Smallville*) back to its status quo, its virtual new beginning. At the same time, each episode contains scenes and narrative developments that contribute to ongoing, serial developments in character, mystery, and overall developing story arc.[30] Thus *Smallville*'s episodic seriality, taking place temporally (and biographically) before the mythic (or trademarked) aspects of the Superman character means he can move forward, not inevitably toward death, but rather toward his (familiar, but indefinitely deferred) immortal myth.

He does this through two textual strategies. First, as Gaines suggests, the "genius of the mythic hero . . . is that his actions will never extinguish him. Because he is mythic, he is doomed to repeat, . . . he is also most at home in the series form, which reconstructs the key components of his type each week." Thus, on the one hand, for Superman to remain Superman, each episode and every adventure must always ultimately return him to the character we already know. To watch Superman is to repeat the story we are already familiar with.

This aspect of the Superman mythic narrative in *Smallville* is particularly evident in limit cases, such as the program's one hundredth episode, "Reckoning".[31] In this episode Clark tells Lana Lang about his secret powers and they soon become engaged. Lana however dies in a car wreck. These developments are novel to fans of the Superman myth. In the course of events Clark actually travels temporally back in time and relives (although does not repeat) this day in his life in order to alter the ending. He succeeds in changing the events, which unintentionally leads to the death of his father instead. This, however, is the ending that is "supposed" to happen in the Superman myth.[32] Thus the episode ends with his father's funeral rather than yet another repetition of the day because the narrative has arrived at the proper mythic history, despite the initial digression (which has been corrected).

The next episode, however, does not start from a virtual new beginning. Clark's father is still dead (and John Schneider has left the series), Clark still feels guilty, and Lana still does not know Clark's secret, etc. Unlike the kind of television Eco and perhaps Gaines, writing prior to the changes in the television landscape we are exploring here, have in mind (perhaps *The Adventures of Superman* or even the 1970s and 80s feature film series),

Smallville offers not only this repetition (of the Superman myth, of the basic genre conceits each week), but also difference. In addition to *Smallville*'s episodic elements that work to maintain the Superman myth, each episode also contributes to an ongoing serial narrative. While each episode may (re)present a new villain, monster, or meteor freak to be defeated by the end of the episode and, as demonstrated by "Reckoning," rarely departs (for long) from the accumulated Superman myth, it does not however return to a virtual new beginning. Nor does it guarantee the myth will remain unchanged. Each episode acknowledges the events of past episodes, locating them in the characters' past and suggesting some of them as causal elements in the characters' present. The program and the characters are not temporally static. In *Smallville* seriality intervenes and temporality clearly matters as the characters' relations have evolved and developed (if, often, glacially, still forward), characters have graduated from high school, skipped through/past college and become young adults (even as the actors continue to age well past their character's age). In important ways, therefore, time does move forward – even if events are constantly and continuously anticipated, delayed, and deferred again and again. This is accomplished without sacrificing the mythic qualities of Superman, but indeed marching not ultimately (as Eco suggests) toward consumption and death, but indeed toward the mythic Superman and the birth of a recognizable hero. The series pursues immortality by leading up to the mythic. Rather than constant repetition to avoid consumption and death, *Smallville*'s Clark Kent is bumping against the limits of temporal mobility. At worst, his past will one day catch up with him.

Smallville presents a "pre" Superman who can move forward in time *toward* his mythic status without being simply consumed and instead of moving toward death. Indeed the program itself, if not the character, will eventually be consumed and will end (although the afterlife of television suggests even this will be deferred again and again – potentially indefinitely through immortal cosmopolitan sustainable growth). But, as Gough has suggested, referring to the narratives of the feature films, "After that is when 'Smallville' and 'Superman' will sync up" (quoted in Aurthur 2006: B9). The reluctant Superman, stuck in a hesitant adolescence filled with aspirational traits and self-doubt anxieties, continually defers, not death, but his embrace of and ascension toward myth. This is how the combination of character and property are negotiated through the time and space of television in transition

At the same time, narratively this is fascinating because, as Millar keeps reminding, "the interesting thing about the series is you know how it's going to end. You know Lex and Clark are going to end up in Metropolis and be bitter enemies. For us it's how interesting and unexpected the journey is to Metropolis" (quoted in Schneider 2001: A19), and yet constantly deferred nonetheless.

Smallville combines a complex history of property ownership, in which the "property" is a world famous superhero character, with the extensive and similarly complex narrative history and buildup of that fictional character. It does this through a combination of common television practices in the era of transition, utilizing genre hybridity; aspirational characters; and a combination of series and serial elements. As Gordon remarks, referring to *Lois & Clark*, "a large part of the series' appeal then lay in its ability to unite past and present, to elide history and offer a disembodied past in the form of a commodity for consumption" (Gordon 2003: 157). *Smallville* exceeds even this practice precisely by locating the character of Clark Kent's past in our present. Drawing on the history of Superman as property and character, it picks and chooses elements designed to appeal to different audience groups it would like to combine into, not a mass, but a coalition audience. It picks and chooses from a variety of these simultaneous and contradictory histories in a way that balances not only novel and myth, but that composes a character and story comprised for and by different audience groups into a coalition of identities the network hoped to attract. In doing so it acknowledges, on the one hand, as Eco later did himself, "the intense emotional participation, the pleasure of the reiteration of a single and constant truth, and the tears, and the laughter – and finally the *catharsis*" (Eco 1985: 182). For Eco – and indeed *Smallville* – this means that "then we can conceive of an audience also able to shift onto an aesthetic level and to judge the art of the variations on a mythical theme" (Eco 1985: 182). If for Eco, however, this is further evidence that such "characters have little future but an enormous past, and in any case, nothing of their past will ever have to change the mythological present in which they have been presented to the reader from the beginning," then *Smallville* perhaps demonstrates that in fact the mythological present of Superman is indeed always changing. But *Smallville* locates the present *as* the hero's past, when changes can and do occur. The past *is* the future as *Smallville* is designed for its textual life and institutional afterlife. That change is the inevitable result of so many iterations and the only strategy for maintaining immortal, mythic status.

If the WB sought to utilize Superman to facilitate its shift from netlet to network, to mainstream and masculinize its audience, then it found it needed to change Superman into a character befitting the WB and symptomatic of its concerns about itself and its audience. Here the temporal circulation associated with the branding of intellectual property runs up against the narrative logic of a lengthy narrative build-up.

CHAPTER 6

24
In Real Time

Stunting |*stənt • ng*| |*stʌnt • ng*|
verb

- *doing something unusual or difficult to attract attention or publicity.*
- *a term taken from the defensive plays used in professional [US style] football. Stunting includes scheduling specials, adding guest stars, having unusual series promotion, and otherwise altering the regular program schedule at the last minute. Beginning in the late 1970s, the networks adopted the practice of deliberately making last-minute changes in their schedules to catch rival networks off guard. These moves – calculated and planned well ahead of time but kept secret until the last possible moment – were intended to blunt the effects of competitor's programs. Generally these maneuvers are one-time-only because their high cost cannot be sustained over a long period.*[1]

Eight weeks after September 11, 2001, one month after commencement of the US-led invasion of Afghanistan (October 7, 2001), three weeks after the premiere of the WB's *Smallville* (October 16, 2001), two weeks after the release of the very first Apple iPod (October 23, 2001), and six days prior to the American Airlines Flight 587 (later revealed to be accidental) crash into Queens, New York, the Fox Television Network, on November 6, 2001, debuted a dramatic action hour called *24* with an introductory sentence that stated "The following takes place between midnight and 1:00 a.m. on the day of the California presidential primary." This was followed by: "Events occur in real-time."

Certainly time was of the essence that fall. The future was being rewritten each week. A formally and aesthetically extravagant program

about terrorism and political assassinations featuring the mid-air explosion of a terrorist-bombed passenger airliner in the pilot episode – produced well ahead of the events of that fall – might have proven to be ill-timed.[2] But a program about action and consequence, torture and heroism, in "real-time" was something else. This was, as series co-creator Joel Surnow has called it, the program's "trick" (Surnow quoted in Meyer 2007). Each hour of time spent watching *24* on television would be equivalent to an hour in narrative time, adding up, by the end of the season, to 24 hours and the worst day in the life of federal agent Jack Bauer (Keifer Sutherland).

This conceit (or trick) was at its essence a programming stunt. It was designed to make the show unique and to garner attention from amid the clutter of early twenty-first century television programming. To emphasize the point, co-creator Robert Cochran[3] filled publicity and trade interviews with his initial skepticism about whether such a concept could work ("I think it's brilliant. Too bad it's impossible.")[4] (quoted in Bianco 2001a: 4D; see also, for example Adalian 2001; Weinraub 2001). The show's unique narrative approach garnered plenty of attention while its writing and production resulted in immediate critical acclaim (followed by Golden Globe and Emmy nominations and wins), but ratings were slow to follow. *24* debuted with "a less-than-spectacular start" by finishing fourth in its Tuesday night, nine o'clock timeslot (EST)[5] (Huff 2001: 121). Nonetheless, Fox had achieved several goals by airing *24*, whether or not it proved strong in the ratings. By providing a seemingly timely, critically acclaimed, high-production-value action hour, *24* drew new and different kinds of attention to the network during a period when increased competition and a changing televisual landscape looked to be leaving Fox behind. This was so much the case that Fox renewed the program for a second season, even though it was the lowest rated program to be renewed that year. By this time *24* was not only a site of "quality" programming for a flailing network, but also a place for Fox to experiment with potentially emerging forms of response to television in transition, from single-sponsor episodes and product placement, to new forms of delivery such as mobile phones and DVDs.

Back at the start of the twenty-first century, amid television's accelerating transitions, the "fourth network," Fox, itself once a harbinger of rapidly expanding deregulated competition, found itself losing its brand identity as a network and along with it, its ratings, amid a sheer glut of cable and broadcast programming. As Fox attempted the transition from

netlet to full network over the course of the 1990s, its status as an alternative to network programming had gradually been supplanted. The rise of the WB netlet was by now sapping Fox of its youth demographic. United Paramount Network (UPN) was competing for both urban and young male audiences. Meanwhile, the overall ratings for all broadcast networks were shrinking. This led *Variety* to report that Fox "finds itself faced with an identity crisis." Reporting on how ratings had "sputtered," the trade journal elaborated that more generally "the network itself, which not too long ago was synonymous with hip and edgy – and was touted as a serious threat to NBC's ratings dominance among the important adults 18–49 demographic age group – is now being described by a far less flattering adjective: flailing." The trades had concluded that Fox's prime-time identity had, in recent years, "been severely diluted" (Adalian 1999: 1). Other sources concurred, noting that Fox "is in the ratings basement" and at the same time, "The entire Fox schedule . . . is the raunchiest lineup of prime-time television" (Duin 1999: A11).

To make matters more dire, by the turn of the century, Fox was faced with the dwindling tail end of its most successful and most prestigious long-running programs such as *Beverly Hills 90210* (1990–2000), *The X-Files* (1993–2002), and *Ally McBeal* (1997–2002). In 2000 the trades were announcing that "it's virtually all-new on Fox this fall" (Schneider & Adalian 2000: 1). By the next season, Fox's few returning shows were not doing well attracting an audience, with *Ally McBeal*, *The X-Files*, *Titus*, and *Dark Angel* all losing between 25 percent and 50 percent of their seasonal average ratings and all ultimately ending their run on Fox in 2002 (Friedman & Goetzl 2002).

Fox responded by drawing on its well-established tradition of stunting. Indeed, as the first successful upstart national network in the US in 35 years, Fox began as something of a stunt. The audacious upstart was not expected to last, much less succeed, and was viewed at first within the television industry as an amusing novelty. With rising success, it has proceeded ever since in a similar, stunting vein, including the usual kinds of programming stunts practiced by the other networks as well: double-pumping episodes (showing the same episode more than once within a week to draw a bigger overall audience and awareness); starting its new season early – as early as summer, some seasons – so as to compete only with reruns on other networks; surprise guest stars and "very special episodes"; rearranging the primetime schedule during "sweeps" weeks; programming specifically to "blunt" the competition with intentionally

similar-skewing programs, etc. Such practices had begun to fade by the twenty-first century, however, amid concerns that audiences were already confused enough simply trying to find their favorite program within the swell of multi-channel clutter, competition, and alternatives.

Fox took stunting further, however, in part by defining its Network identity (its brand) as an alternative to other network programming, appealing in its break-through years specifically to a disaffected, young (initially further defined as "ethnic" and "urban") male audience not frequently programmed to by the "Big Three" whose ideal demographic, as defined by advertisers, was white women between 18 and 49. Fox's appeal to this forgotten audience was articulated through a combination of violence, raunchiness, and later, sports. In this sense, a list of the network's defining, earlier programs reads, in the context of programming of that era, like a list of programming stunts: for example, the anti-family sitcom *Married . . . With Children*, the true crime sensationalist reality precursors *America's Most Wanted* and *Cops*, the genre-bending and (remember when it was considered too) raunchy *The Simpsons*,[6] and the often crass variety/skit comedy *In Living Color*.

As significantly, Fox's institutional practices can be understood as the application of stunting beyond the specific realm of programming. For example, perhaps Fox's most successful stunt was the dramatic December 1993 announcement that it had lured the rights to the NFL's NFC telecasts away from CBS (after 38 years) with a four-year, US$1.6 billion offer. This was followed, five months later, with another institutional stunt, the surprise announcement that Fox had signed a long-term affiliation pact with 12 stations recently acquired by billionaire investor Ronald Perelman and formerly affiliated with the other networks (eight with CBS). The dramatic revelation of the acquisition of more and better-placed affiliates, filched from established networks, was quite a stunt.

At the same time, Fox's institutional stunts continued in its relationship with the Federal Government. Fox, for example, did not offer its affiliates programming during the primetime hour of 10.00–11.00 p.m., thus evading one of the FCC's conditions of being a national network. Added to this, Fox consistently provided FCC commissioners with small favors like T-shirts, program tapes, and invitations to programming parties as well as to affiliate meetings. *Variety* reported in 1994, for example, that, in typical fashion, "When Fox closed down four blocks of Melrose Avenue to celebrate the premiere of 'Melrose Place,' FCC commissioners were there along with the stars" (Flint & Wharton 1994: 1). Such stunts resulted in

the other networks referring to the FCC as the Fox Communications Commission even while the FCC's deregulatory penchant meant that such stunting helped lubricate, among other things, a waiver of the financial interest and syndication (Fin-Syn) rules for Fox (before the rule was simply rescinded outright), a waiver of the newspaper-television cross-ownership rules allowing News Corp. (Fox's parent company) to maintain ownership and operation of WNYW in New York[7] as well as *The New York Post*, and no scrutiny of the Australian company News Corps.' ownership of US TV stations despite FCC rules limiting foreign ownership of US broadcast stations (so long as the subsidiary, Fox Broadcasting, remained a US company) (Flint & Wharton 1994; D'Alessandro & Edelson 2000; Walker & Ferguson 2000; Blumenthal & Goodenough 2006). Such a history demonstrates Fox's willingness, even eagerness, to utilize and expand the definition of television stunting. Stunts were not just for programming schedules during sweeps, they were the basis for an entire business model. Stunting, in fact, can be said to define the network's history of competitive practices as well as its programming identity.

It is therefore not surprising that when faced with a ratings and identity crisis at the start of the new century, Fox would respond with stunts. What was surprising was the sustained lengths to which one such stunt would extend, ultimately accruing significance and meaning beyond the context of a simple programming stunt. What would have been predictable at this time, for example, would have been for Fox to try to build ratings by relying on its tradition of cheap reality show stunts (*When Animals Attack*, *Alien Autopsy*, *Secrets of Magic Revealed*). In fact, during this dire period, it did precisely that, programming, for example, a hastily-conceived game show knock-off called *Greed* against ABC's ubiquitous and (seemingly) unbeatable *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* during the November sweeps period of 1999. This was followed by such programs as *Who Wants to Marry a Multi-Millionaire*, *Celebrity Boxing* and *World's Wildest Police Chases* during the 2001–2 television season. While these programming stunts helped blunt competitors' shows and led to short-term ratings successes, they did not improve the network's prestige, change its increasing reputation for "raunch," or ultimately draw in the increasingly elusive, desirable, upscale audiences other networks were pursuing through what has become known as American Quality Television. So Fox also developed programming stunts meant to accomplish these goals. First and foremost among them was *24*.

Stunting *24*

> You have no idea how far I'm willing to go to acquire your cooperation. (Jack Bauer to Jane Saunders, season/day 3 Episode/hour 19)

24 is marked immediately as a stunt through its conceit of presenting its narrative in "real time." As Chamberlain and Ruston remind, the very title of the series emphasizes the narrative conceit: "Notably, the show is not named *CTU* or *Agent Bauer* or any other subject, location, or organization-type name" (2007: 19). The emphasis, from the very start, is on the real time presentation.

From a production point of view, achieving and effectively maintaining this real time presentation required behind-the-scenes stuntwork. Describing their process as a "nightmare in terms of storytelling," writers constantly had to "account for every second of time and begin each new installment exactly where the last left off." There could be no narrative ellipses glossing over down time or moments when characters needed to do something uninteresting, inconvenient, or not yet conceived. At the same time, continuity presented unusual production challenges as "the details of plot, costume, makeup and character had to be kept consistent not just from scene to scene, but from episode to episode across an entire season of filming" (Carr 2002: 25). Actors had to wear the same clothes for 10 consecutive months of a season's production, make-up, hair, and props could only change as much as they might in 24 hours. For the second season, Jack Bauer's daughter, Kim (Elisha Cuthbert), was given a "magic bag-purse" big enough to credibly contain whatever the writers might eventually determine she would need in later episodes (Carr 2002). While these efforts were made to establish continuity and maintain the illusion of a single 24-hour period in which the narrative takes place, it was with what was presented on screen and how it was presented that the program leveraged its stunting.

Televisual Stunt

While meant to be occurring in "real time," *24* was hardly a static meditation on the nature of time or reality. This was not an average 24-hour period in the lives of the characters. Therefore the real time effect was not achieved through the cinematic tradition of long takes where events on screen take as long to play out as it takes to watch them. This was instead

much more a literalization of TV time: as Keifer Sutherland reflected on his role, "If you haven't said it or seen it, it doesn't happen, it doesn't exist" (Carr 2002: 25). Rather than cinematic "realism" *24* was more closely aligned to televisual "reality" aesthetics.

The real time of *24* – as the program's title graphics constantly reminded viewers – operated like the countdown of a timer: in a competition and/or on a ticking time bomb. Time in *24* is always about urgency. Indeed, the narrative effect of *24* is one of constant, improbably sustained anxiety. Columnist Frank Rich once described the format as an "all-cliffhangers, all-the-time series" (2005: 1). The show is relentless, with the real time clock pushing the narrative always forward, without pause, through constant narrative curves, brutal, graphic violence, and nary a moment of humor or levity to relieve the mood.

This effect of real time was particularly emphasized in the program's visual strategies. "Real time" was conveyed through reminders of the simultaneity of the multiple events of various plotlines. Real time for *24* came to mean everything happening at once. This was signified through a visual look that emphasized a techno-fetishism, featuring frequent and multiple uses of split screens, close-ups of counting clocks, and a mise-en-scene filled with multiple screens (from mobile phones to computer terminals to plasma screens, often several simultaneously in shot).

In John Thornton Caldwell's terms, describing the spectrum of stylistic exhibitionist visual strategies utilized by television programming production amid the multi-channel universe, *24*'s visual style borrowed equally from both the Videographic and the Cinematic ends of the spectrum, picking and choosing from each rather than blending them. The resulting look is visually dense, a stylistic amalgam heavily featuring multiple variations of the screen within the screen. For Caldwell, the Cinematic look is "a film look in television" that is meant to be read as "*Panavision Shows That We Care*" (italics in original, Caldwell 1995: 12). For *24* this meant that the program was not only shot on film, but utilized "spectacle, high-production values, and feature-style cinematography" (Caldwell 1995: 12; see also Chamberlain & Ruston 2007). The night shooting, rapid editing, controlled color palette, and lighting that dramatically varied based on location, demonstrated the production's debt to Hollywood-style, big-budget feature film production standards. Cinematographer Peter Levy, nominated for an Emmy for his work on the pilot episode, recalls: "The show plays out in real time. Therefore, I shot handheld whenever possible, using long lenses, trying to make it feel more

immediate. I limited myself to white light to desaturate things by playing down color. I explored over-exposure in four or five shots, and I avoided backlight. For split-screen elements, I was cognizant of framing issues – making close-ups very dramatic, closer than usual, and making wide shots very graphic'' (quoted in Daily Variety 2002: A4).

The videographic look, meanwhile, is defined by Caldwell as ''an appreciation for multiple electronic feeds, image-text combinations, videographics, and studios with banks of monitors that evoked video installations'' (1995: 13). *24* systematically utilized this look as well, featuring frequent graphic titles superimposed over the filmed image, particularly the ticking, digital clock, designed to simulate the look of light emitting diode bed-side and/or time-bomb clock faces. The frequent and famous use of split and multi-screen imagery is also derived from the videographic, simultaneously simulating the control room of a live television production, the control center of a video surveillance operation, and multiple open windows on a personal computer utilizing an operating system with a graphic user interface.[8] Screens are frequently split not only in half, but into three, four, even five simultaneous moving images. Frequently, with the screen split into multiple windows, at least two will show the same scene or character from simultaneously different angles on the action, an arrangement, Chamberlain and Ruston have noted, ''that offers little additional narrational or character information, instead serving only to emphasize the extreme videographic style of the programme'' (2007: 17). Most often, however, multiple screens, placed as essentially bumpers on either side of a commercial break, serve as a reminder of the ''real time'' conceit by emphasizing the simultaneity of all the narrative strands currently taking place. This is as opposed to the similar stylistic indulgences, for example, of the British series *Spooks* (re-titled *MI-5* for US cable and DVD distribution) where split and multiple screens – as well as more frequent use of black and white, another stylistic excess – are used to convey a sense of surveillance, of all-access, multi-angled visibility rather than narrative temporal simultaneity.

The series' investment in practices of stylistic exhibitionism (as Caldwell defines ''televisuality'') extends beyond techniques of the cinematographic to include construction of the mise-en-scene as well. Jack Bauer's office, for the first seven seasons the Counter-Terrorist Unit's (CTU) situation room, exceeds even the loftiest fantasies of the most imaginative federal employee, looking much more like the studio of a post-MTV cable news channel, with its urban-chic, concrete and exposed beams, and modern-minimalist

furniture. The lighting in this federal office, while apparently fluorescent (based on color and source) nevertheless finds room for suggestive shadows and tasteful moodiness. All of this thoughtful and stylish design enhances the overall cinematic style of the program. The videographic style, meanwhile, is emphasized by the situation room's proliferation of electronic screens – from phones to a multitude of computer terminals to plasma sets, each often reflected off the clear glass screens that serve as cubicle dividers – varying only in their size and videographic output, often reminding the attentive viewer of the ticking time and simultaneous narrative events. Indeed, given such a stylistic set with which to work, Surnow, upon touring the actual White House Situation Room, is reported to have been greatly disappointed, regretfully telling *The New Yorker* that it "looked like some old tearoom in a Victorian house" (Meyer 2007).

As might be typical of televisual stylistic exhibitionism, these dramatic cinematic and videographic design elements are combined primarily to add visual interest and distinction, but contribute relatively little to the narrative or even the form of the program. Nonetheless, this combined style does serve as a constant reminder of the program's central stunt, its "real time" presentation. For example, even while the multiple split screens often function as a transition from one scene to another, signaling a new location and new plotline (not unlike the frequent use of wipes in *Star Wars*, for example), they nevertheless reassert – by briefly multiplying the events on screen – the simultaneity of these events, reminding the viewer that each is happening *now*. The narrative and narrative conceit conspire at these moments with the addition on screen of the videographically produced digital clock to assert the narrative urgency that defines *now* even as it keeps ticking away.

Such an expensive and complexly crafted deployment of narrative and visual stylistic exhibitionism in service of a novel narrative conceit helps to place *24* not only within the transforming textual strategies of television in transition, but also more specifically within the transition's developing tradition of what has been termed, both generically and evaluatively, American Quality Television.

Quality Stunt

Seeking to overcome a reputation for raunch, seeking access to a profitable audience demographic of wealthy, highly-educated viewers, and seeking to enable its producer-sibling Twentieth-Century Television to shoot a

program with international appeal, all while simultaneously airing the generously titled *Celebrity Boxing*, Fox's programming of *24* can be understood as a quality stunt.

In fact, *24*'s status as quality television is not without dispute. Chamberlain and Ruston, for example, rather lament that *24*'s incorporation of the videographic amid the cinematic coupled with its abandonment of a liberal human narrative bias handicap its access to the quality pantheon (2007). While such concerns might again hint at Fox's take on quality television being set firmly within the realm of the stunt, there is also ample evidence to suggest that at least as a generic descriptor (if not necessarily as an evaluative judgment) *24* signifies as quality television.

The phrase "quality television" as a descriptor for certain kinds of television programming was perhaps initially applied as an oxymoron, but meant to draw attention to a certain tendency within the vast wasteland of 1970s primetime network fare. Programs, particularly those airing on CBS and produced by MTM and Tandem, seemed timely and relevant in a way that entertainment television had failed to resonate through the tumultuous 1960s. CBS's gambit to replace its rapidly aging, non-urban audience with an advertiser-friendly, younger, more urban, demographic segment meant that programs like *Green Acres* and *The Beverly Hillbillies* despite adequate ratings, were replaced by the likes of *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and *All in the Family.* The resulting "turn to relevance," further signified, especially in the Tandem productions, by visual and performance style recalling television's "Golden Age" live anthology dramas of the early 1950s, ignited new kinds of interest in the content and narrative possibilities of broadcast, commercial television (Caldwell 1995: 56). By the 1980s, "quality TV" was used to describe both an objective programming category, where quality TV producers were "in the business of exchanging 'quality TV' for 'quality demographics'" (Feuer et al. 1984: 32) and an evaluative judgment in which textual characteristics such as multiple protagonists, self-reflexivity, and liberal humanism provide the alibi for taking this particular program seriously as an object of critical discourse and cultural aggrandizement (Feuer et al. 1984; Thompson 1996; Williams 1994a).

By the mid-1990s quality TV had signaled its identity through production strategies that foreground characteristic textual markers. These have included, in addition to self-reflexivity and ensemble casts, traits such as an on-going episodic-serial structure, a high-production-value cinematic visual style, and narrative sophistication based on, typically, psychologically

motivated characters facing morally ambiguous situations amid layered private and public relationships. The identification and analysis of such programming as specific and distinct from other types of television has become institutionalized as the study of "American Quality Television" (Jancovich and Lyons 2003; Nelson 2005; Chamberlin and Ruston 2007; McCabe & Akass 2007; see also Kackman 2008).

24 was Fox's twenty-first century answer to these developments, its effort to exchange a quality program for a quality demographic it sorely lacked in the US, while hoping to participate in the increasingly lucrative exportation of American Quality abroad as well. By March 2002, trade journals such as *Advertising Age* were suggesting that this strategy had succeeded, noting that *24* was "the type of edgy, well-done drama that should define their [Fox's] network" (Friedman & Goetzl 2002: 3). This has remained a characteristic of the program, with *The New York Times* reporting in 2006 that *24* "has become Fox's most upscale show and its strongest franchise behind *American Idol*" (Amdur 2006). Scholarly consensus seems to largely agree that this program mostly fits the set of generic criteria signifying twenty-first-century quality television and is therefore worthy of specific kinds of critical attention. As Dennis Broe simply notes at the start of his ideological critique of the program, "It was seen as a prestige item in the Murdoch canon" (Broe 2004: 100; see also Peacock 2007).

The "quality" of *24* has paid off for Fox in a number of ways that have proved increasingly important for the network during an on-going era of television in transition: reaching affluent, educated viewers; marketed with distinction outside the US; and subsequently selling DVDs of each program season. In terms of audience-reach, not only has the "quality" of the audience improved for such series, but the composition of that audience has been, perhaps surprisingly, evenly split between male and female viewers of this action program, with typically just over 50 percent of viewers men, and just under 50 percent female (Amdur 2006). The audience has not been restricted to the US, either, as *24* has been successfully marketed in dozens of countries on all continents. It has also offered Fox a site for exploring alternatives to broadcast as a means of profitable distribution.

Nevertheless, it has, in its own way, challenged the limits of what constitutes American Quality Television. Televisually, the program relies nearly as much on videographic practices as cinematic ones (split screen, digital clock superimposition, mise-en-abyme, etc.), producing an, at

times, garish (rather than tastefully realist) visual design. The mise-en-scene frequently depicts exaggeratedly dystopian urban landscapes, as if catering to the worst fantasies of isolated, conservative white suburbanites. Characterizations in *24* have often been considered less than sophisticated, with characters not so much developing as arbitrarily changing instead (usually from good to evil or back, as in daytime serials' frequent trope of character reversals). Plot twists have appeared arbitrary or impulsive nearly as often as inevitable, planned, or inspired. Ideologically, the typically liberal-inclusive narrative thrust of quality television has been challenged by violent, masculinist bifurcations between familiar/good and other/evil in which torture, state-sponsored surveillance, and roguish disregard for due process, all not only operate with impunity, but are celebrated within the context of the narrative. At the same time, the narrative intensity of the program is not for the delicately constituted, with an often effectively sustained intensity level unleavened by humor, romance, or contemplation. Casting has frequently been stereotypical by gender and ethnicity (or, in rare but celebrated cases, reverse-stereotyped) (Chamberlin & Ruston 2007). Ensemble cast work, meanwhile, is undermined by the frequently realized threat of significant characters killed off (often mid-season, mid-episode). In multiple ways, then, even within the parameters of AQTV, *24* has been something of a stunt.

Thus Fox saw *24* as an opportunity, through a sort of quality stunt, to further its (comparatively limited) "appeal to affluent, highly educated consumers who value the literary qualities of these [types of] programmes, and ... to hook this valuable cohort of viewers into their schedules" (Jancovich and Lyons 2003: 3). But if *24* were initially a quality stunt programmed by a network still better known for a more vulgar variety, there is little indication that the show was conceived of other than as an extended loss leader. The program was not necessarily originally built to endure.

Loss Leader Stunt

Given the expense of a quality production such as *24* and the difficulty in sustaining a multi-layered programming stunt indefinitely, there is evidence to suggest that *24* was perhaps initially greenlighted as a loss leader. John Caldwell, borrowing a phrase from retail sales, has argued that "many primetime televisual shows ... can be viewed as 'loss leaders.'

From this merchandising perspective, it does not totally matter if distinctive televisual shows . . . score low ratings, return poor advertising revenues, and face cancellation'' (1995: 20). Instead, such shows draw attention to a network, bringing names, concepts, or critical approval to the network long enough to make the desired, new audience notice the network's programming from amid the multi-channel clutter. If the program is not sustainable, does not draw large enough ratings to justify its expense, and only actually airs a short while, the attention drawn to the network nevertheless justifies the programming experiment. As Caldwell notes, ''after all, most shows have low ratings and are canceled'' (Caldwell 1995: 20). A certain kind of stylistic, experimental, and/or critical distinction can at least heighten a flailing network's image and open the rest of its schedule to some additional sampling by desirable audiences and/or advertisers alike.

In the case of *24*, Fox initially ordered only 13 episodes of the series. On the one hand, this seems strange given the show's premise – happening in ''real time'' and named *24*, it seems inadequate that any fewer than 24 episodes would suffice. On the other hand, if there was substantial lack of faith in the program, the order of 13 episodes for an untried programming stunt was, in 2001, rather generous. *24* was also unusually expensive to produce for a Fox program in 2001 with the pilot episode, for example, budgeted at approximately US$4 million (Gallo quoted in Chamberlain & Ruston; 2007). All these factors suggest that Fox was either confident (but not enough to order 24 episodes outright) or simply willing to take a loss on the order in exchange for what the ''stunt'' and the ''quality'' of the program would bring to the network. Fox was willing to use the loss leader strategy to exchange a quality program for a quality audience. Losing money on the program was considered worthwhile for the possibility of what it might attract to the network.

What *24* did bring to the network was an initially disappointing ratings return. This, however, was soon complemented by Golden Globe and Emmy nominations and then wins. The first season also produced nearly unanimous critical praise in the popular press and positive word of mouth about the network's new program. Moreover, early buzz meant that as early as June 2001 (five months before it first aired) it was being widely reported that foreign sales for *24* were already ''among the best in the network's history'' (Carter 2001: C9). *Variety* ''guestimated'' in April 2002 (before the first season had concluded) that *24* episodes were going for $750,000/episode in ''deals with foreign terrestrial TV stations abroad,'' while noting that ''newer series, with fewer episodes available,

may not have yet reached their full potential average price per episode, as they can get sizable bumps on renewals.'' This compared to $1.5 million for Fox's *X-Files* that year, $800,000 for the *West Wing*, $650,000 for *CSI*, and $500,000 for the *Sopranos* (*Variety* 2002: A1). In part for these reasons, Fox, whose parent company ultimately owned the series and was invested in its afterlife, renewed *24* for another season. It was the series with the lowest ratings to be renewed that year. It certainly helped that the deficit-financed program was produced by Twentieth-Fox Entertainment, the Fox network's corporate relation. But Fox soon reconsidered *24*'s loss leader status and began using it as an experimental site of television in transition. In the process it drew further attention to itself and its programming and *24*'s ratings grew considerably as well.

Transmedia Stunt

At the start of the first episode a voice-over states the narrative premise of the program (again with reference to time): ''I'm federal agent Jack Bauer, and today is the longest day of my life.'' This soon became the institutional script for the series as well: extend those 24 hours over as much time and space as possible. Before getting renewed for a second 24 hour season, *24*'s first 24 was initially broadcast (and broadcast again), soon available on cable, then DVD, thereafter on iTunes and then finally renewed. *24* thus provided Fox with much more than a loss leader programming stunt to draw some attention to the flailing network. Before its second season began in November 2002, *24* was fully enmeshed in a series of experiments Fox was conducting to accommodate the rapidly changing conditions of television in the twenty-first century. The second season saw *24* continuing to be ''repurposed'' on sibling cable outlet FX, already available for purchase on DVD, experimenting with product placement, single-sponsored episodes, and ''integrated'' commercials. Soon the series would serve as a site for experiments with website tie-ins, mobile phone spin-off episodes, publishing tie-ins, digital sales, and later sponsored streaming (for instance on the Fox co-owned Hulu site). All of these efforts were intended to compensate for television's growing number of outlets and fragmenting audience. Each of these allowed Fox to experiment with alternative models of profitable broadcasting while deferring costs, enhancing revenue, and further publicizing the program, whose ratings were now increasing substantially over the first season.

To compensate for the high production costs and potentially limited syndication market for such a rigidly serialized program, Fox participated in a number of strategies to bolster immediate profits for the series while also testing practices that might hedge against impending transformations in the television industry by locating new sources of revenue, distribution, and promotion for the program. Noting the potential liabilities of an intensely serialized program where every minute of screen time counts (or, rather, is graphically counted), one (competing network) executive noted that if people miss the first few episodes, ''who is going to want to join a show to see what's happening to this guy at 4 a.m.?'' (quoted in Carter 2001: C9; see also Friedman & Goetzl 2002). To compensate, Fox participated in the early century's trend of repeating and ''repurposing'' in which new episodes were repeated later in the week on a corporate-cousin cable outlet. Initially *24*'s episodes were repurposed on the sibling cable outlet FX (Dempsey 2001: 6), but when initial ratings were disappointing that first season, Fox added another repeat on the Fox Network on Friday evenings and another to FX so that the same episode could be seen on cable Sunday and Monday nights, before the next episode aired on Tuesday and again Friday evenings. This strategy was meant to ''maximize the revenues in the first run'' (Fox Entertainment Group president and COO Peter Chernin, quoted in Dempsy 2001a: 1) but also allowed audiences more chances to keep up and not miss any of the serialized episodes (Dempsey 2002). Gail Berman, Fox President for Entertainment, noted ''You want to make sure you can get the audience in there quickly to build momentum'' (Weinraub 2001). It was a classic ''double pumping'' programming stunt made more urgent by the program's narrative form. Taken straight from the network playbook, such a strategy was now only the starting point in a much larger scheme to assist audiences in ''sampling'' the program and to sustain the program's afterlife.

As *Daily Variety* put it, ''Fox and Imagine [Entertainment] are pushing for the immediate extra runs because, even if *24* becomes a hit on Fox, it may not be able to get any big bucks deals in future rerun syndication because the episodes are so closely linked to each other. As a general rule, reruns of TV series with subplots that spin out over multiple episodes fair poorly in the ratings compared to self-contained hours like *Law & Order*'' (Dempsey 2001b: 6). And, referring to cable re-airings, ''such repurposing is becoming the norm, despite the fears of some creators that their syndie coin is being threatened'' (Adalian 2002: 1). These were early (not entirely successful) efforts to accommodate changing relations of temporal

travel and scarcity amid transforming conditions of television programming.

Fox promoted *24*'s second season by releasing the first season, in its entirety, as a boxed DVD collection, a few weeks before the autumn television season began. This was viewed as "a bold step" because it was "the first time a broadcast network skein will get a DVD release before it hits the syndie market" (1) and, with the clock always ticking, it was "the fastest TV-to-DVD turnaround ever" (Kipnis 2002: 64). DVD releases of television had been very tentative up to this point so far because of fears that audiences would not want to pay for TV they normally (even recently) watched "for free," or, alternatively, that knowing that DVD sets were imminent might discourage viewership of currently airing episodes, and finally because DVD sales might diminish syndication value. For *24* there was already little hope for high syndication value, given the serial nature and need for close viewing attention. Ratings were also not a concern, as they were already quite low. In this way, it was reported, "the show's creators are hoping its availability prior to the debut of season two Oct. 29 will help capture an audience of new viewers" (Kipnis 2002: 64). DVD sales and subsequent ratings for the new season seemed to bear this out. By the end of 2004, the first three seasons of *24* had generated US$72.1 million in DVD sales (Koeppel 2005).

Fox soon concluded that DVD sales raised interest in the show, whose second season ratings improved substantially ("more than 25 percent") over the first season. As series co-creator Joel Surnow noted, "the DVD sales also helped justify the kind of money we have to spend to make the show" (in Lambert 2003). Such success, as the *New York Times* suggested, demonstrated to the television industry that "It is a multiplex world on television now, where, even with network shows, a prime-time slot may only represent a first screening" (Carter 2001: C9). Since the success of *24*'s DVD release, the practice has subsequently become widespread in television, with the DVD release of a season frequently as anticipated as the new season on network, constituting an important step in the continuing afterlife of a program. *24*'s novel narrative structure – serial that is resolved completely every 24 episodes – was particularly well suited to DVD distribution, where viewers could acquire all 24 "hours" (really 42 to 44 minutes each without commercials) and watch them at their own pace (often, reportedly, over the course of an exhausting weekend). The intense series of action and cliff-hangers, told in continuous time without ellipses, in some ways is actually better suited to home video

than to weekly viewing and better suited to commercial-free rather than frequently interrupted showings and thus more attuned to television's own changing temporality.

Watching *24* on DVD coalesced with the program's format and stunting well enough that not only had sales of DVDs contributed substantially to the show's profits, but bingeing on entire seasons became something of a minor phenomenon. The real time gimmick, constant anxiety-ridden cliff-hangers and ticking clock, apparently compelled viewers of television on DVD to watch multiple episodes or whole seasons in short order. The *New York Times* reporter Charles McGrath claimed that he and his wife "seldom left the couch" for a week after getting a new season of *24* on DVD, "bingeing sometimes on five or six episodes at a time" (2006b). By 2008 such occasions were so well recognized that a *Washington Post* reporter, for example, noted that NCAA women's basketball was really quite exciting, but "Okay, so it wasn't like taking in the second season of '24' on DVD" (Chad 2008: E02).

Fox apparently soon realized as well that this program was better suited to contiguous viewing, uninterrupted by breaks. *24* therefore offered Fox the perfect site to experiment in alternatives to the established model of program sponsorship and advertising. This, during a time when it was being widely reported throughout the industry that, "On the network side, execs are preparing for the threat of commercial-zapping technology such as TiVo by striking innovative deals with advertisers" (Adalian 2002: 1). By season/day 2, Fox had contracted with Ford Motor Company to sponsor the season debut, "commercial free." Ford is reported to have spent more than US$5 million to sponsor the second season of *24* (Graser 2002; Woolf 2007: 78). Instead of commercial interruptions, the season premiere went without breaks. Two three-minute Ford ads simply led into and out of the episode. The deal with Ford was repeated in 2003 for season/day 3, with the season premiere again commercial free, but with a short parody of *24*, *The Donation*, accompanying the episode, which also extensively featured a Ford F-150 truck (Woolf 2007: 78). Single-sponsor, uninterrupted, product integration: these were only the start of experiments acquiescing to the changing time of television and seeking alternatives to traditional sponsorship within television's transition.

By season/day 4, Fox was experimenting with its programming strategy in order to more closely replicate the exhilarating DVD viewing experience so well-suited to the program's format. That season Fox chose to delay the debut of new episodes of *24* until January, introducing the new season

with two, two-hour segments over two successive nights, intended to get viewers attention and sustained interest. The season then proceeded continuously apace – in real time, as it were – until the May finale, with no need to fill in weeks with rerun episodes (Amdur 2006).

In 2005, associated with the fourth season, or "day 4" in series chronology, Twentieth Century Fox Television launched a *24* spinoff series available only to wireless customers of Verizon's newest, third-generation network (3G) compatible mobile phone. These one-minute "mobisodes" introduced new spatial mobility to *24*'s ongoing experiments in temporality. They featured the further adventures of (very) minor characters and were collectively called *24 Conspiracy*, but were tied to the television series only through production style, name, and the occasional walk-on of a phone actor onto the television screen. Indeed, none of *Conspiracy*'s 24 episodes were written or filmed at *24*'s production studio, Real Time. These episodes were designed to capitalize on the *24* brand to build an audience for mobile phone distribution and viewing of television-style programming while also utilizing "another conduit for attracting young viewers to [Fox's] hit show" (Robischon 2005). This was part of Fox's larger plans, first announced in 2003, to "build mobile properties around its biggest movie and TV franchises" and therefore further "monetise the TV and movie rights Fox holds." At the same time, on-air promotions of mobile content were considered, such as characters on *24* using their mobile phones "to photograph evidence" and thus provide "an on-air product demonstration" (New Media Age 2003). The second season that "mobisodes" were available, the programming for phones changed, consisting not of original storylines involving minor characters, but "repurposed" Jack Bauer stories (Zeitchik 2006).

Torture Stunt

As the series has continued into eight seasons/days, the cinematic and videographic televisual features have become routinized, even somewhat predictable (split screen into four locations, superimposed digital clock, ticking sound, commercial break, etc. etc.). Similarly, the formal conceit/stunt of "real time" and a long day spread across an entire season has become a taken-for-granted part of the show. This character of Jack Bauer seems doomed to more than a week, cumulatively, of the worst days of his life, probably more. Fox has become attuned to scheduling stunts that best

suit these characteristics of the program, now typically offering the first four of the 24 hours during one week in January, spread across two evenings, amounting to a mini-narrative that, while providing some brief closure, launches the larger narrative of the next 20 hours, one each week, without interruption or reruns, until the finale arrives, for two or more hours, during the May sweeps period.

As these initial stunts have become familiar – the standard operating procedures for the series – the program has found places within the narrative world to continue its stunt work. Recent seasons have moved out of LA, taking place in South Africa, Washington DC, and New York City. As is typical of action sequels, most seasons attempt to raise stakes from the previous seasons, so that Jack's first bad day consisted of preventing a political assassination while his later days have included preventing nuclear war, the release of weaponized viruses, and further nuclear detonations. Each successive season looks less like the world viewers inhabit and increasingly like a science-fiction dystopia of despotism, destruction, and death.

The series had, from the start, been sensitive to the political climate in which it was airing. A program about terrorist attacks on US soil following so closely upon the actual, much more traumatic events, *24* was careful to be sensitive. Dennis Broe has claimed that for the first season, "due to the prevailing political climate, the show was rewritten mid-course and transformed from a series critical of the workings of a secret government [in the political, if not genre, mode of Fox's earlier *X-Files*] to one that validated that secrecy. The lead character, initially positioned as a fugitive driven outside the law by a corrupt government, instead becomes its staunchest defender as the series scrambled to reinscribe itself within the framework of the war on terrorism" (Broe 2003: 39). As Fox's Head of Standards at the time, Roland McFarland, told *The New Yorker* in the fall of 2001: "The President [Bush] has an approval rating of ninety per cent. So we won't be taking any more satirical cheap shots at him at this time" (Friend 2001: 44).

Perhaps most significantly, amid these rapidly changing political conditions, raised stakes, and dystopic anticipations, the program has engaged in the increasingly frequent depiction of supposedly heroic characters torturing others in order to extract information. Beyond a melodramatic sensationalism and the elicitation of public commentary, the narrative function of these sequences remains somewhat ambiguous. Torture in these scenes usually extracts *some* information, it is usually (but not exclusively) conducted on someone actually withholding something, and always moves the plot forward, but it rarely resolves any significant narrative enigma. The

ultimate plot resolution of a season/day has not yet relied upon a successful torture sequence. These scenes are almost invariably graphically depicted, whether involving gunshots to the knee, makeshift implements of torture gathered from the mise-en-scene, or the mysteriously sterile, medical application of a fictional concoction called hyoscine-pentothol, brewed by the government specifically to induce unbearable pain in a human subject.[9] Prior to such scenes, half-hearted moral objections to torture are offered by un-heroic characters only to be shunted aside. The suggestion that torture – whether effective or not – might ultimately be counterproductive has not been seriously entertained, despite great dramatic potential. This may be because, as writer and showrunner Howard Gordon has suggested, such scenes are included largely as a perverse form of televisual stunt: ''Honest to God, I'd call them improvisations in sadism'' (quoted in Meyer 2007).

These improvisations in sadism have attracted a loyal and notable following. In addition to former presidential contender John McCain,[10] the Vice-Presidential Cheney family, former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, the late Bush press secretary Tony Snow, notorious former White House attorney John Yoo,[11] and reactionary radio talk show hosts Laura Ingraham and Rush Limbaugh have all praised the program, justified the violence, and claimed to be fans.

Such fans in such influential places have led Dahlia Lithwick, writing for *Slate* and *Newsweek*, to urge that ''the most influential legal thinker in the development of modern American interrogation policy is not a behavioral psychologist, international lawyer, or counterinsurgency expert,'' but is actually ''none other than the star of Fox television's *24*: Jack Bauer'' (2008). Meanwhile, Slavoj Zizek, writing in *The Guardian* has argued that for *24*'s heroes, ''the fact that they are able to retain any normality while committing such acts is the ultimate confirmation of moral depravity'' (Zizek 2006).

Series co-creator Joel Surnow has delighted in such controversy, provocatively insisting that the program's portrayal of torture is important and largely accurate. He also gleefully refers to himself as a ''right-wing nut job'' and played the part of happily besieged political outsider in Hollywood for former *Washington Post* reporter Jane Meyer's profile in *The New Yorker* (2007). While his recent efforts to counter-program Comedy Central's *The Daily Show* with *The Half Hour News Hour* on the Fox News Channel proved both a commercial and comedic failure, his continued flaunting of *24*'s reactionary representations has placed others involved in the program on the defensive. The program's star actor, for

example, Keifer Sutherland is Donald Sutherland's son and the grandson (on his mother's side) of Tommy Douglas, a former socialist Premier of Saskatchewan and later the federal leader of Canada's New Democratic Party. Sutherland has told Charlie Rose that "I would have to say that my politics would be leaning toward the left." Therefore, he has been at pains to explain the numerous torture scenes in which he plays on *24*, telling Rose "Within the context of our show, which is a fantastical show to begin with, the torture is a dramatic device to show you how desperate a situation is. And how urgent and desperate these characters are to solve this one specific thing and time is running out. And so it is a dramatic device. It is *not* to be confused with what we think is right or wrong. And it's a television show"[12] (Sutherland 2007). Rather similarly, co-creator Robert Cochran, meanwhile, has told the conservative think tank Heritage Foundation that *24* "isn't realistic in any documentary or literal sense. What [the show] tries to do is capture an emotional and psychological reality of living in a world where terrorism is a threat. If you're looking to us for realistic advice on how to fight terrorism, we're all in real trouble" (Farhi 2006: C01). This news came too late for Bush administration figures in charge of actual US torture policy, as former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff told the same group (while still in office) about *24* that "frankly, it reflects real life" (quoted in Lithwick 2008).

Slavoj Zizek meanwhile finds Sutherland's disavowals and distancing insufficient, arguing that *24*'s narrative stunt, its literal presentation of the much-expounded-upon ticking-time-bomb scenario, dramatizes, regularizes, and reifies a dangerous politico-ethical assertion: "The pressure of events is so overbearing, the stakes so high, that they necessitate a kind of suspension of ordinary moral concerns; displaying such concerns when the lives of millions are at stake means playing into the hands of the enemy" (Zizek 2006). Unusually for Zizek, he seems to take this representation at face value rather than symbolically or even metaphorically – sometimes a kneecapping is just a kneecapping. When he sees torture on *24*, he is seeing torture, presented by an American television program in a post-September 11, 2001 world. His concern is that the hero that emerges from such a program, performing torture as a grave a duty while retaining human dignity, is imbued with a "tragic-ethical grandeur" as a result of his distasteful but narratively clearly necessary actions[13] (Zizek 2006).

In the cultural context in which the show has been produced and circulated, torture signifies literally, not symbolically or metaphorically. As Toby Miller has noted, the conservative appeal of action programs has

always been that their success seemed to indicate "that citizens approved of their governments acting covertly or brutally in the interest of state security" (Miller 2001: 18). *24*'s practice of stunting, however, makes such representational moments difficult to read, offering at the same time a potential ethical disavowal, suggesting, along with Sutherland, that it is not *really* torture, just a narrative device.

Recurring narrative devices, however, are not without meaning. Thus these torture stunts carry symbolic as well as literal meaning. Miller suggests that for other viewers the action genre's "appeal lay in the romance of citizenship." *24*'s torture stunts exaggerate and spectacularize the espionage-action genre's longstanding appeal that from "within the norms of governance, viewers test and enjoy to the limit cases presented by life outside, in the comparative anarchy of international relations or crime, where loyalty and patriotism (even the mundanity of public employment) are suddenly reforged as a play with death and doom" (Miller 2001: 18) as well as with morals and ethics. From this perspective, regardless of the specific position the program seems to endorse, it is providing a safe but public space to see current, controversial, cultural discourses played out and dramatized. Yet even this imagined (if graphic) play in the space of the limits of citizenship is also a stunt.

It is clear that the continued references to *24* in the on-going national discussion about the ethics and effects of torture have placed this program at the center of a significant national discourse. Torture may be another loss leader opportunity to place this program in middle of discussion, any discussion that generates and sustains interest. The more frequent, the more graphic, the more indiscriminately applied the torture is in any episode, across any season, the more likely *24* will feature at the center of political discourse, become part of a national issue, and be necessary to see before the next round of debate. Torture as a programming stunt attracts attention and gets the program mentioned in well-placed circles, from national newspapers to policy discussions.

Stunt Man

> Jack Bauer saved Los Angeles . . . He saved hundreds of thousands of lives. Are you going to convict Jack Bauer? (Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia[14])

> The depraved heroes of 24 are the Himmlers of Hollywood. (Slavoj Zizek[15])

> It's a fantastical show. And so I always find it very funny when, actually, people start talking about it like it's a real thing. Because it's so not. (Keifer Sutherland[16])

As the program's hero, Jack Bauer's predilection for torture is merely a symptom of this character's ethos of action, the fantasy he represents of cutting through bureaucratic hindrance and simply getting the job done. The fantasy of *24* is essentially that of an adolescent libertarianism. It is the fantasy of an individual – one man – taking action, rules be damned, and taking care of business, particularly in periods of intense adversity, when a hero is called upon to rise up and save the day. Heroics here are conceived of as the fantasy of action and freedom amid a technologized world of bureaucracy, confinement, rules, and impediment. It is the fantasy of individual transcendence. It is a fantasy that the show, ultimately, cannot sustain.

Thus *24* is not a program about torture. Torture on *24* is a heightened representation of momentary white male transcendence. It is a visually compelling metaphor for breaking through red tape, stepping out of the impositions of affective relations, bureaucratic regulations, and technological limitations and simply, outrageously, acting. In this sense it can be understood as a metaphor for what the show considers a heroic response to besieged white masculinity (which it conflates with nation).

24's reactionary narratives are about an action-oriented white man who is put upon in every conceivable way. Jack Bauer faces constant, exaggeratedly heightened crises for which he is responsible. He literally cannot catch a break at home or at work. He is under incessant threat from all manner of nefarious Other – foreign governments, international terrorists, former lovers, even ambitious First Ladies serve to define his missions. Jack, however, is also besieged by siblings and parents who plot against him, close friends who betray him, and a daughter prone to serial victimization who must be saved. On the job he trusts his superiors, his colleagues, even his President at his own peril. He acts alone and yet cannot escape a broad and overlapping network of personal and professional relationships.

Jack is also enmeshed in a bureaucratic network of governmental surveillance and complex technology, both of which he relies on completely in order to succeed at his tasks. Technologically, he is in constant communication, through a variety of devices, with his office, with other operatives, other agencies, and with his family and friends.

Yet for all their vital importance, mobile phones lose their signal mid-conversation (although notably, not in the aftermath of a nuclear detonation), ring during quiet surveillance, are left behind, or run out of batteries. Computer data can be disconnected, stolen, infected with disinformation, or inaccessible due to security measures, either friendly or malicious. Bureaucratically, Bauer relies on his position as an agent of a federal agency to gain access to information and secure locations. He utilizes his colleagues' expertise to solve problems, gain information, and protect him. He relies on a chain of command to know his assignment and to get colleagues to participate effectively in covert operations. Nearly every episode, however, finds him compelled to ignore regulations, disobey orders, overstep his jurisdiction, even torture or kill a colleague. Jack thus relies upon these necessary networks of technology and bureaucracy even as he experiences them as limiting.

Jack's rugged, individual masculinity is expressed in these moments of transgression as well as his constant, usually lone, mobility. He utilizes all manner of transport to rapidly commute back and forth across Los Angeles (during the first seven seasons), usually on his own. His mobility is temporal as well, as the ticking digital clock constantly reminds us. The time it takes him to get somewhere in or around Los Angeles seems to have no correlation to that destination's relative distance, only to the narrative's temporal imperatives.

The split screens used to signify this temporality and Jack's mobility through it can also function to remind us of his relative isolation, separated from the simultaneous activities of others, divided by space, united by time. Moreover, these split screens reinforce the idea that Jack is essentially reactive. Even as protagonist, these simultaneous activities were not motivated by him. The cause and effect linkage of plot events is not put into motion by his actions. He spends most of each day/season attempting to catch on and catch up to these events, responding to rather than motivating action. In all these ways, besieged, beleaguered, alone, and acting out, Jack signifies a masculine figure left behind amid changing cultural norms.

While the program's overt fantasy elements are downplayed in favor of an emphasis on ''realist'' representational and narrative strategies, Jack is unquestionably a super hero. The masculinity on this program nevertheless differs from that on *Highlander* and *Smallville* (or *Doctor Who*). Kiefer Sutherland was not cast to be objectified and gazed upon in the same way as Adrian Paul, Tom Welling, (or in a different vein, perhaps the Doctors).

Sutherland, who had previously starred as dark and/or villainous characters in feature films such as *Lost Boys*, *Dark City*, and *Eye for an Eye* told *The New York Times* that he took the role of Jack Bauer against type, in part to break away from being cast as disturbing characters (Weinraub 2001). He is rarely shirtless or soaking wet. The antithesis of the metrosexual, he is tired, dirty, damaged, and dressed down. He occupies a damaged body with a scarred psyche, signifying a worn-down masculinity in crisis with time.

Bauer's relationship to time is, in fact, different than the other characters examined here, but certainly no less intense or determining. While Duncan MacLeod has lived for over 400 years and exists amid a series of flashbacks, and Clark Kent may be invulnerable to the ravages of time even while his super-powered hyper mobility means that geographic distance is never measured in time, and as we shall see, the Doctor is a Time Lord, more than twice as old as Duncan MacLeod, whose mode of conveyance is a time and space machine, Jack Bauer, meanwhile, feels every crushing second of the 24-hour periods he has had to endure. The pressure of time is Jack's animating theme. His mobility, while not comparable to the others', is still remarkable in any given 24-hour period, as he travels unfettered throughout Los Angeles and its surrounds, constantly on the move, never pausing, never obstructed for long.

On the other hand, the torture Jack has performed can be seen to take a toll (if slowly) on his character. This masculine character perseveres through pain, suffering, and loss and keeps pursuing his professional, nationalistic goals, but ultimately his entire moral being is in question. Tara McPherson suggests that "In an era of convergence, media monopolies, and diffuse networks of power, stand-alone masculinity really won't take you very far, but the series can't quite imagine and sustain a new mode of masculinity either" (McPherson 2007: 185). Sworn to uphold the law, Jack breaks it all the time. Sutherland suggests that by the start of the seventh season/day, Jack is discovering that "blind ideology and patriotism was not what he thought it was going to be" (quoted on Sutherland 2008), placing a tension between nationalistic and professional behaviors. McPherson suggests that over several seasons "we do witness the emotional toll that working 24/7 takes on the hero's psyche. Many of the series' most sympathetic characters often seem just moments from coming undone, barely able to keep up with the pace (and anxieties) of daily life in the twenty-first century" (McPherson 2007: 182). Cumulatively "doing what's necessary" as Jack frequently explains his actions, is

shown to exact a toll on the character to the extent that hero worship and identification with Jack Bauer are tantamount to masochism. The torture scenes themselves are shown as distasteful – although efficient and at the same time, sensationally thrilling – and although there is little immediate evidence, they do seem to sap Jack's spirit. He has not only experienced at least eight of the worst days of his or anyone's life, in the process he has seen his wife kidnapped and then killed, his daughter kidnapped and then frequently thrown in harm's way, his lovers betray him and die (at his hands), close friends killed (some by him, others because of him), and he himself has been beaten, drugged, tortured, kidnapped, blackmailed, and manipulated. After all this, as Chris Barsanti has observed, "the show never provides the kind of expected action-film climax where the chisel-faced hero, having looked into the void of evil and partaken of its dark tools, finally offs the villain to applause from the balcony" (Barsanti 2006). Instead, the next damned thing happens and Jack (as well as the audience) is given no respite.

Revealing more than perhaps intended about Fox's stunt programming, Gail Berman, Fox's president for entertainment at the time, suggested that "what was especially appealing about the show was its strong family component: the Kiefer Sutherland character is deeply involved with his family, and so is the presidential candidate, played by Dennis Haysbert. The family tensions and action sequences overlap throughout the drama" (Weinraub 2001). Indeed, they not only overlap, they become intertwined, leaving Jack no space in his 24-hour workday to distinguish between professional and familial duties, national and domestic loyalties. After several seasons, this façade has failed as Jack has become much less a caring family man than he started in the first episodes of season 1 (with much less family). As these narrative repercussions (or are they causes?), indicated, as showrunner Howard Gordon suggests, a series of "whatever it takes" has produced a character in which "Jack is basically damned" (quoted in Meyer 2007).

For Jack Bauer on *24*, heroism is really a stunt. His torturing an efficient but thoroughly incredible plot device – really a dramatic stunt to keep the narrative moving in line with the clock. The ticking time bomb situations a stunt to raise the stakes and justify the 24 continuous hours of non-stop tension, action, and violence in the absence of humor, contemplation, or even food and bathroom breaks. For the twenty-first century, with television in transition, what has changed is the relentlessness of time, of narrative, forcing endurance and spatial mobility. The thrill of heroic

service is now mostly wearying as an unending series of limit cases threaten loyalty, patriotism, and masculine identity. National, professional, and domestic duties converge, conflict, and become spatially and temporally inescapable. Jack Bauer's eroding sense of duty, purpose, and self continues to suffer through temporal stunts whose high cost cannot be sustained.

CHAPTER 7

Doctor Who
Regeneration through Time and (Relative Dimensions in) Space

Homo sapiens. . . . Puny defenseless bipeds. They've survived flood, famine and plague. They've survived cosmic wars and holocausts. And now here they are, out among the stars, waiting to begin a new life. Ready to out-sit eternity. They are indomitable. Indomitable! (The Doctor[1]*)*

Emergency temporal shift! (Dalek "Sek"[2]*)*

Borrowing inspiration in equal measure from each of these sentiments, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) at 7.00 p.m. on March 26, 2005, debuted, to much anticipation, a pre-watershed program called *Doctor Who*. Already indomitable in its own way and apparently quite ready to out-sit eternity, this debut nevertheless signaled an emergency temporal shift on the part of the BBC: this was not the first time that the Saturday evening tea-time slot featured the debut of a program called *Doctor Who*.

The first time came nearly unnoticed, occurring the day after US President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. *Doctor Who* debuted on the BBC at 5.15 p.m. on November 23, 1963 with a 25 minute episode entitled "An Unearthly Child." This episode introduced the mysterious and rather crotchety character known only as The Doctor and a small cast of accompanying characters – including an attractive young woman, apparently the Doctor's granddaughter[3] – who would travel with him in his space and time machine, the TARDIS (an acronym for Time And Relative Dimensions In Space). The TARDIS was disguised as an already-dated British police call box and sat in a junkyard along a place in London called Totter's Lane. The TARDIS (presumably through something to do with these "relative dimensions") was, ingeniously, considerably bigger on the inside than it was on the outside.

Little interest was aroused by the first few episodes and the program was already facing possible cancellation when it introduced the Nazi-like, emotionless, murderous, pepper-pot alien monsters, the Daleks. The Daleks inspired a national fad in Great Britain with Dalek-mania guaranteeing the program's place in history.[4] As whole families gathered on Saturdays in front of the television – children hiding behind the sofa when new monsters appeared – the program soon introduced another fantastic science-fiction conceit that would help it facilitate a lengthy run. At the very end of the 1966 four-part episode "The Tenth Planet," the Doctor (William Hartnell) collapses, apparently near death. Rather than dying, however, his body "regenerates" into a completely new form (and new actor, Patrick Troughton). The "new" Doctor was the same character – same history, same memories – but with a new body and new personality traits. This was not like the theatre, where it is occasionally announced that the part will be played tonight by someone else. This was instead presented as a usual part of the on-going life of this unusual character. The part would now be written for the new actor, playing the next regeneration of the same character within the same continuity. By drawing on the series' genre possibilities to write in the ability of the central character to literally be reinvented every so often, the program could embrace change, potentially keep current, and outlast (while never being entirely dependent upon) any one actor. *Doctor Who* (1963–89) would become the longest running science fiction television program in history, a BBC staple on early Saturday evenings for decades, and an iconic world-wide emblem.

In the course of the program's first 26 years on the air, seven different actors played the eponymous Doctor.[5] While the TARDIS would continue to look like an increasingly anachronistic police box (it was described by the Doctor as an "old type-40" whose "chameleon circuit" was broken), the Doctor's companions would come and go. He rarely traveled without at least one companion, usually from Earth's twentieth century, usually a young woman, usually with a powerful scream. In addition to his useful ability to regenerate, ensuing episodes further revealed that the Doctor was over 750 (presumably Earth) years old, had an unusual body temperature, and had two hearts. In short, the Doctor was an alien Time Lord from the planet Gallifrey with a bit of a thing for late twentieth-century Earth . . . especially England.

Forty-two years after "An Unearthly Child" was first broadcast and 16 years after new episodes had ceased broadcasting, *Doctor Who* (2005–present) debuted again. Viewers of BBC One *that* early Saturday evening

were treated to some very familiar, but newly updated, theme music followed by a familiar, but newly updated, fast-paced, big budget, action story again centering on the Time Lord The Doctor. Entitled "Rose," the episode's opening shot situates viewers grandly if enigmatically in outer space, just above the Earth. The viewer is soon hurtled toward the familiar blue planet, Google Earth style, zeroing in on its most important spot, London, England (played in this sequence by both London and Cardiff). Upon arrival, immediate, local, temporal specificity is realized: a bedside clock is showing 7.30 a.m. What follows – in highly-produced, televisually attractive, musical montage – is a typical day in the life of a shop girl as she takes public transportation from the housing estate where she lives with her mum to the department store where she works. Her name is Rose Tyler. She has an estuary accent, an on-again, off-again boyfriend named Mickey Smith, an uncouth mother, and very soon a surprising encounter with an animated mannequin. This last bit, the encounter with the mannequin, leads to the entrance of the Doctor, of whom we first see his hand as he grasps Rose's hand (a continuing, uncommented upon, visual motif throughout the new program) at a full five minutes, 23 seconds into the episode. His face, as played by Christopher Eccleston, appears two seconds later, uttering a single word: "run." More than a full minute of screen time passes before he bothers to mention, "I'm the Doctor."

What followed was not a reboot or a remake of the earlier series, nor another set of stories simply set in the same fictional universe, but instead an updated continuation of the previous program featuring the familiar police-box-shaped TARDIS, familiar antagonists (animated mannequin Autons – last seen in 1971, later Daleks, Cybermen, Sontarans, the Master, etc.), and young, female companions from early-twenty-first-century Earth . . . especially London. This program was the same program – same history, same memories – but with a new form and new traits. *Doctor Who* had regenerated.

Why *Who* Now?: It's About Time

Doctor Who's regeneration demonstrates the extent to which publicly funded public service broadcasters like the BBC have had to adapt and acquiesce to television in transition as much as their commercial counterparts have. Licensed by Royal Charter since the 1920s[6] as a "public corporation acting as a Trustee for the national interest" (quoted in Petley

2006: 42; see also Alvarado 2004), the BBC airs no advertising, instead finding financing primarily through license fees charged directly to television viewers. Constituted as a public service with a social purpose for the citizens of the nation, the BBC is subject to close government scrutiny and regulation. Such scrutiny is particularly intense around periodic charter renewals and amid debates over license fees.

Still recovering, in many ways, from the deregulation and privatization of the Thatcher government, the BBC has scrambled to embrace technological change – developing new distribution technologies like Freesat and iPlayer – and to market itself globally in order to meet new (de)regulatory conditions of both its charter and its financing. At home, meanwhile, it has also met with fragmenting audiences and rapidly growing competition that challenge its position and its very mission as a national public service broadcaster. These changes have in some ways come more gradually to the heavily regulated British television industry than in the US, but they have come and indeed accelerated in recent years. For example, in 1995 there were 225 programs on British television that had an audience size of 15 million people or more. By 2004 there were only 10 programs that had that same size audience. The next year, as *Doctor Who* debuted, there were none (Grade 2006). At one time a broadcast monopoly, BBC One lost 14 percent of its audience and 36 percent of viewers aged 10 to 15 between 1981 and 2004 (Turner 2004).

Amid growing alternatives, commercial competition, and shrinking and fragmenting audiences, the BBC has had to justify the monies it receives through license fees at a time when these fees were being characterized as an unfair, state-sponsored imposition on the "free market" by the legions of encroaching commercially funded endeavors. Some surveys suggest that nearly half (48 percent) of the British public do not think that the BBC license fee offers "good value for money" (see Clarke 2008b). Regulatory and technological changes leading to more television outlets distributed over more technologies have changed the space and time of television in Great Britain. Television's transition has had no less an effect on public service broadcasting, even if that effect has been felt somewhat differently.

One significant difference, for example, has been the response to a fragmenting audience. The BBC's public service mission has meant that this was not simply a question of consumer demographics making different marketplace choices, but instead a potentially troubling reconstitution of the citizenry. Thus, television in transition for the BBC has meant, as Chairman of the BBC Trust, Sir Michael Lyons, has urged:

> This is not just about changes in the technology of broadcasting. It's not just about the explosion of choice across the media. It's also about Britain itself changing, about very different expectations in an age of customisation; of new confidence amongst minorities now able to join up across the world; about power devolving to the nations; about communities undergoing rapid change; about social and economic relationships fracturing and re-forming in new and different ways (Lyons 2007).

The BBC's mission in this era is changing. It can no longer imagine that it is addressing a homogenous United Kingdom community, but instead a fragmented public of regional, ethnic, racial, linguistic, national, and sexual multi-diversity. As a publicly funded public service broadcaster, the BBC would be asked to adapt not only to changes in television (its "service") but also to changes in the citizenry (its "public").

Indeed, this became official policy with the Communications Act of 2003. This act explicitly spelled out the principles of public service broadcasting within the actual regulations governing broadcasting for the first time (Petley 2006). Further, it produced a new, combined superregulatory body called the Office of Communications (Ofcom), to oversee media entities such as the BBC and enforce these new principles.

These formally ensconced principles of public service broadcasting are clearly accounted for and impact upon *Doctor Who*'s regeneration. For example, they would now explicitly include the remit to 1) represent the "full diversity of cultural activity in the United Kingdom"; 2) require programming schedules that include a "suitable quantity and range of high-quality and original programmes for children and young people"; 3) direct that broadcasters air "a sufficient quantity of programmes that reflect the lives and concerns of different communities and cultural interests and traditions within the United Kingdom, and locally in different parts of the United Kingdom"; and 4) broadcast an "appropriate range and proportion" of programming produced "outside the M25 area" – i.e. outside Greater London (quoted. in Petley 2006: 44; see also: http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2003/ukpga_20030021_en_25#pt3-ch4-pb2).

To meet these criteria and demonstrate its on-going significance to television and to Great Britain, the BBC resolved to look forward by looking back. It would prove its worth as a public service by re-gathering Britain's public, even amid television in transition. It would in effect draw on the broadcast-era idea of a national television audience, regenerated for a new era. As John Hartley explains:

> National identity shifted from unity based on land and blood, to diversity based on difference. It was vital, in such circumstances, to settle on *symbolic* markers of nationality, derived from *institutions* rather than land, from *discourses* rather than ethnicity, and from *rituals* not neighborhoods. People had to be brought together by *doing* things together rather than *being* something in particular. This was where TV scored highly (Hartley 2008: 169).

This is precisely the necessary public service role the BBC had in mind to justify its charter (and fees) amid rapidly changing conceptions of British identity, the rapidly changing "public" it was meant to "serve." This would justify its role as public service television by clearly meeting its perceived challenge to, as Sir Lyons put it, "play its part in reinforcing social cohesion in an increasingly diverse society" (Lyons 2007).

To succeed, however, this strategy would need to be updated for the realities of twenty-first century television. Mere spatial reach coupled with temporal scarcity would no longer suffice in reuniting the fragmenting audience into a composite public. What was needed was a regeneration of public service television. By regenerating a program like *Doctor Who* – again looking back to look forward, through a sort of emergency temporal shift – it sought to also regenerate collective viewing (in the family, across the nation, throughout the public), and thus public service broadcasting.

In the case of *Doctor Who*, the BBC shifted a valuable property and internationally recognizable brand into new circumstances. By awakening what former network controller Michael Grade later called "sleeping assets", such as *Doctor Who*, the BBC followed the Daleks' lead in initiating an emergency temporal shift to bring a fondly remembered program with a continuingly active fan base back to Saturday evenings (Grade quoted in Brunsdon & Gray 2008: 139).

The original *Doctor Who* emerged, after all, largely in the context of the BBC's anxiety over growing competition from the relative newcomer ITV. As ITV reduced the BBC's audience share to less than 30 percent, the BBC responded by recruiting new personnel (such as Sydney Newman, the drama chief who would commission *Doctor Who*), altering programming strategies (such as programs meant to attract families to tea-time educational shows), and experimenting in new formats (such as serial science-fiction), all with an eye toward justifying its public funding (Bould 2008: 213). In the twenty-first century, as new forms of competition again threatened the BBC's public service mandate and alibi for public funding, it made sense for the Doctor to be called upon again to save the day.

Regeneration

> And now I know what sort of man I am, I'm lucky. (The Doctor[7])

By the end of the 1980s, the original *Doctor Who* seemed to many, particularly within the BBC, to be nearing the end of its life. Narratives were frequently enmeshed in the minutiae of its own considerable narrative buildup. The mostly studio-based multi-camera shooting style, very low budgets, and eccentric casting and costuming it inherited from its early 1960s, children's programming origins rendered its aesthetic increasingly dated within a rapidly changing, increasingly commercial television landscape of the era. In 1989, after several time-slot shifts, a brief hiatus, and an antagonistic BBC director,[8] the program was placed on "indefinite hiatus," not to return until "the time was right" (quoted in *The Daily Telegraph* 2002: 21). The time was not, apparently, quite right in 1996 when BBC Worldwide partnered with US studio Universal Television to produce a tele-film "back door" pilot featuring an eighth Doctor (Paul McGann) that would air in the US on the Fox network and in Britain on the BBC. After that single made-for-tv-movie failed to gather large enough US audiences (or, despite a significant audience, to impress British viewers who detected an off-putting "mid-Atlantic" sensibility to the tele-film), no further production was pursued (see Chapman 2006: 173–83).

Some of the most significant transformations to contemporary television commenced during the 16 years *Doctor Who* was (with that one exception) out of production as a television program. *Doctor Who* weathered its indefinite production hiatus by demonstrating an impressive afterlife. The BBC kept the *Doctor Who* brand busy by releasing videos and then DVD's of old episodes, licensing publications – from novelizations of old episodes to original stories of the Doctor's further adventures to a wide variety of non-fiction, comics, and other periodicals – producing audio dramas, animated webisodes,[9] comedic one-off parodies,[10] and licensing merchandise from clothing to toys to various Whoviana collectibles. Furthermore, the BBC had, during this time, not only licensed *Doctor Who* to Virgin Publishing (as early as 1990), but also "decided to take the unprecedented step of licensing professionally produced fan fiction for mainstream distribution" (Perryman 2008: 23), thus merging scripted and unscripted routes for the program's afterlife. The program's fan base from around the world (once so annoying to BBC management) ran

websites, organized and attended conventions, produced and exchanged fiction and homemade videos, while watching almost constant reruns around the world.

Indeed, "for any one month between *Doctor Who* ending and the new series coming on you could get up to five or six separate *Doctor Who* stories a month, which is a lot more than you ever got when it was on the telly" (Hickman quoted in Perryman 2008: 25). Moreover, the BBC's commercial division, BBC Worldwide, profited from the steady income *Doctor Who* offered as the center of a media franchise involving sales of videos (and later DVDs), books, and other merchandise licensed around the world (Chapman 2006: 186). The *Guardian* succinctly reported in 2002, prior to the announcement of the new program, that "although the television series ended more than 10 years ago, Dr Who [sic] remains a nice little earner for the BBC" (Pandya 2002: 25).

Both these licensed and fan-based activities kept *Doctor Who* busy, alive, and present despite the absence of new episodes. Indeed, the character and the program were remembered quite fondly, topping surveys in Great Britain of favorite science-fiction and cult TV heroes of all time even nearly a decade and a half after the show was pulled by the BBC. Shortly before its return was announced, in fact, "a poll found it to be Britain's most missed TV programme" (Deans 2005: 1). During its hiatus amid television in transition, *Doctor Who* had indeed become "an extraordinarily complex and multi-layered franchise" (quoted from Russell 2006: 31; see also Canberra Times 1998: 4; Knight 2002; Simpson 2003; Newman 2005).

The regeneration of the Doctor then made particular sense given his already-existing presence in precisely those new (and old) locations where television (and the BBC in particular) needed to be amid rapid, industry-wide transitions and globalization. Here was a (space and time) traveler who was recognized in Britain, but also throughout the world, as a uniquely British offering to the genre of sci-fi and to television more generally. *Doctor Who* was already a brand, already living its afterlife, already traveling quite well through time and space. Not only that but through the ingenuity of regeneration, The Doctor did not face Superman's conundrum of repeating himself endlessly as myth or moving forward in life, inexorably toward death. Even as the character moves forward and ages through new stories, he simply regenerates to avoid his ultimate fate. All of which has led BBC Worldwide Chief Executive Officer (and suspiciously named[11]), John Smith, to declare *Doctor Who* as a "Superbrand." Exactly what, Smith argues, "will be crucial in helping us

take the BBC even more successfully to international audiences"[12] (quoted in *Wales on Sunday* 2008: 3). The combination of factors that made *Doctor Who* a superbrand would also be crucial for reinventing collective viewing for a fragmented public.

While no single program could reverse the direction of television in transition or change the standing of a national broadcaster, this context suggests what was at stake for the BBC during this period in which *Doctor Who* was one of the highly visible additions to the programming schedule. The institutional pressures mobilizing *Doctor Who*'s regeneration involved the deployment of a beloved BBC brand in a televisually fascinating way so as to collect a large, diverse audience in front of the screen, offering a clear demonstration of the BBC's continuing significance to the nation and thus justifying its continuing charter and license fees. In other words it was seeking to reclaim the "public" for the "service" it was providing (and for which it was charging). This public could be constituted at three (symbolically and otherwise) important sites: the family; the nation; and the world. *Doctor Who* was already well situated to appeal to all three; its regeneration could further enhance these appeals.

Family viewing

First, *Doctor Who* would be for a demonstrably family audience. It would air in the pre-watershed hour of 7.00 p.m. on Saturday evenings and represent the BBC's effort to reconstruct the idea of family viewing.[13] Such an appeal would fulfill not only the specific Ofcom requirement to program quality for young audiences, but also provide a form of cohesion to the national audience, once again gathered together around the BBC's offerings.

Doctor Who was returning to Saturday evenings, as producer/writer Russell T. Davies put it, "Not just for fans, but for generations who used to love it and want their kids to see it" (Davies quoted in Phelan 2005: 6). Indeed Christopher Eccleston claimed to have taken the lead role primarily to be part of a quality production aimed at family and especially kids (quoted in Russell 2006: 48). Writer Steven Moffat agreed, suggesting that "TV doesn't bother trying to target entire families any more. If 10-year-olds aren't talking about the show in the playground on Monday morning then we'll have failed"[14] (quoted in Smith 2004: 3). As *Variety* put it, the BBC's plan would therefore be "highlighting the quality public service fare that will help the Beeb keep its license fee" (Clarke 2005a: 20). This was the image of the audience pursued by the production, the British

family gathered around the television together, enjoying the BBC's exciting, nostalgic "service."

Thus the success of *Doctor Who*'s regeneration for the BBC and for the practice of public service has been in heralding what has largely been characterized as the return of the possibility of family viewing. Episode director James Hawes has summarized family viewing in the age of television in transition:

> Focus groups . . . had said family TV-viewing was dead. Granny was going to watch the videos and DVDs of 1950s movies with Cary Grant, kids were on the PlayStation or out rollerblading. Everybody was doing different stuff. Somehow this has proved the focus groups wrong, because *Doctor Who* made families sit down and share a storytelling experience all over again (quoted in Russell 2006: 42).

As at least one supportive commentator has speculated, perhaps family viewing had never actually disappeared, but instead family programming itself had (Lister 2005). The press concurred: "The reason *Doctor Who* was a triumph is that, for the first time for some years, we had a new (at least, it felt new) early-evening drama that could be watched by the whole family, something that many in television thought was close to impossible to achieve in the multi-channel age" (Dyke 2005: 14). The BBC's awakening of the sleeping asset of *Doctor Who* allowed it to enjoy the accolades for having reunited the viewing family as a part of its service to the public.

Thus BBC Drama executive Julie Gardner would contend that even casting choices – such as recovering pop singer Billie Piper who played the Doctor's companion, Rose Tyler – were about bringing everyone in the family together to watch:

> It's about glamour on a Saturday night; it's about stardust; it's about being colorful at seven o'clock. And she has the combination of being an extraordinary actress and having a smile which makes everyone else smile at the same time. It means your audience is always going to look at Rose and say "Okay, Saturday night's safe. Or it's a bit safer than it was" (Russell 2006: 52).

While Gardner may have BBC executive board members in mind as much as the audience when thinking about the evening's "safety" for the BBC, her observations demonstrate the extent to which the program was used to justify the BBC's significance in securing a family viewing. By the end of Series 4,[15] it was possible for critics to exalt in the program's giddy

confidence about this newly re-found audience. One paper declared that *Doctor Who* "is the most self-confident programme on television, swinging from sitcom to clever-dick to art house and just assuming that its fans, from 8 to 80, as they used to say on board-game boxes, will swing with it" (Billen 2008: 21), while another simply noted, with ironic post-September 11 pastiche, "We are all Whovians now" (Leith 2008: 26).

It was this sense of re-creating the British family, young and old together, gathered around the television on early Saturday evenings, all tuned into and caring about the BBC, that served the pubcaster so well. Was this not the very definition of public service? The BBC could point to *Doctor Who* to show that it could not only gather a family around the television, but indeed once again unite a nation like no other service available. To put a finer point on it, then, these were not just any families gathered together, they were very specifically British families.

Quintessentially British

Regenerating the Saturday evening *Doctor Who* experience has been understood as returning to its proper place a quintessentially British institution. As the *Economist* suggested in an article entitled "The End of Olde Englande: A Lament for Blighty," while much of the traditional character of the nation may be rapidly changing, "all is not lost [. . .] Auntie has graciously brought back *Dr Who* [sic] – and a new generation can enjoy the deliciously spine-chilling experience of hiding behind the sofa whenever the Daleks appear" (Economist 2006). The London *Times* concurred, suggesting "how special *Doctor Who* is" by stating the program to be "as thrilling and loved" as "bread and cheese, or honeysuckle, Friday. It's quintessential to being British." The article concluded with sentiments that must surely be shared by the BBC (although the BBC would likely have stated it more delicately): "It's at times like this that one thought can still floor you: this is a children's TV show, made by public subscription, in Wales" (Moran 2007). The BBC was being celebrated as a national necessity for bringing back a bit of national heritage in the form of the once-sleeping asset and erstwhile long-running, low budget, science-fiction program, *Doctor Who*.

Indeed the very indomitability of *Doctor Who* – its ability to keep adapting to new conditions, to keep regenerating – strikes a nationalist chord, casting the essence of the program as quintessentially British for many. As Nicholas Cull has observed of the original series, "the TARDIS

remained a Prussian blue 1929-pattern London police box for the next 30 years, and hence served as a metaphor for the persistence of mid-twentieth century British-ness within the series. It carried all the cultural baggage of the picture postcard London 'bobby' ''[16] (Cull 2001: 99). Indeed with the TARDIS one of the program's few (externally) unchanging icons, Cull is tempted to push his point, suggesting that for the geographically small island nation, ''the idea of a vehicle that was 'larger on the inside than it appeared to be on the outside' had its analogue in the country as a whole'' (Cull 2001: 100). *Doctor Who*, in other words, was quintessentially British programming, through and through.

The lengthy history of *Doctor Who* in Great Britain attests to a practice of national cultural production in which potential but unavoidable impediments are reappropriated as signifiers of national distinction. In the case of British national cinema, for example, this has often meant a focus on signifiers of ''national heritage'' and/or small, contained narratives readily read as allegories of the state of the nation in place of the outrageous budgets required to compete with the production practices and visual style of Hollywood films (Hill 2002). For the BBC, as a publicly funded entity, commissioning and producing programming in house, programs are not typically deficit-financed as is standard in the US.[17] The BBC, despite an astounding overall budget, is keenly aware of its ''limits'' in this regard as it continues its mission to pursue the elusive (and constantly shifting) ''quality'' in television production and programming.

The long history and fond associations of *Doctor Who* offer a particularly effective example of how this circumstance can be recast as a treasured marker of national distinctiveness rather than merely a failure to achieve a polished, big budget look and feel. Philip Hinchcliffe, a producer on the original program during the era of the fourth Doctor, associated the quintessential British-ness of the program with the particular conditions and institutional workings of the original series' production at the BBC.

> We've not been obliged to observe the strictly commercial criteria that say a producer on American television has had to observe when everything has to be reduced and ironed out and made to actually work ... We can toss in things that don't have to be totally explained. We haven't got somebody saying, ('Hey, what is this line about?') ... That's not the way British television works ... Certainly not the way the BBC works ... So it's a peculiarly British institution and a reflection if you like of British society, or British audiences and British television ... If the Americans had been given

> the basic format of the Doctor they would have given you a wonderfully logically worked out 'quirky' hero who was always the same, and you would have been able to see around all the eccentricity and predict it; whereas what we have done is leave it a bit rough around the edges . . . The reason we get away with it is because our audiences are more indulgent . . . We suddenly woke up and realized that it wasn't just a kids' programme but there was something in this sort of Englishness that was valuable and was prized by the audience . . . that sort of slightly English comedy (quoted in Tulloch & Alvarado 1983: 178).

Thus on the new *Doctor Who*, it was only the *Los Angeles Times* that was shocked to discover that "There are no writers rooms on the shows." As opposed to US television programs, Davies told the paper "This country simply couldn't afford that system" (Pollet 2008: 30). Elsewhere in the US, the program, despite improved budget and production qualities, has been received "like so much British science fiction, especially Douglas Adams's[18] 'Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy' series," meaning, in an affirmation of precisely this national distinctiveness, that "this *Doctor Who* has a goofy, homemade quality; it's less interested in gizmos than in characters" (McGrath 2006a: 30). This now endearing production and textual tradition, as one scholar has suggested, "draw[s] directly on the programme's origins as a weekly serial trying to deliver the Universe from an electronic studio for around £600 a week"[19] (Potter 2007: 169). Such a "goofy, homemade quality" is inherited from the original series, marking the program as distinctly British – as opposed, in particular, to American.

Therefore, one continuity from the old series to the new is that its essential British-ness, however iconic and fondly received, is measured against the productions circulating from the US commercial industry. As Tulloch and Alvarado summarized in their groundbreaking study of the original series, by necessity, throughout its history, "even at its most ratings conscious *Doctor Who* continues to encourage this distinction of 'character' and 'innovation' in overt contrast to American SF [Science Fiction]" (1983: 179). The rapid growth of terrestrial and digital channels in the U.K., meanwhile, has opened room for ever more airings of deficit-financed US productions across the British programming schedule. Davies has suggested that upon its return to television, *Doctor Who* was unique merely by the fact that most everything else on television remotely similar is American (for example, Johnson 2007: 8). Thus while the new series is much better financed and supported by the BBC than before, affording a

more elaborate deployment of the cinematic range of practices of stylistic exhibitionism that characterize much of television in the twenty-first century (Caldwell 1995), it still draws on a tradition of quirky characters and clever ideas taking precedence over cinematically realist special effects and action sequences.

At the same time, Davies has made a point of hammering home more instantly recognizable textual markers of the program's national identity: "I decided on big iconic Britishness. When we go to London, it's a picture postcard London, with red double decker buses and the London Eye. We don't have pearly kings and queens, but not far off" (Davies quoted in Johnson 2007: 8). Episodes have been generously sprinkled with winking reminders of British cultural pride, from the piling up of anachronisms such as the spectacle of Billie Piper floating over blitz-era London wearing a cool Britannia Union Jack t-shirt ("The Empty Child") to episodes where the Doctor and his companion meet British literary luminaries like Charles Dickens ("The Unquiet Dead"), William Shakespeare ("The Shakespeare Code"), and Agatha Christie[20] ("The Unicorn and the Wasp"). Visually, the program attempts to balance national heritage with cosmopolitan modernity. Icons of the quintessentially British *Doctor Who* (TARDIS, Daleks, etc.) merge with elaborate CGI effects. Both commingle with icons of both British cultural heritage and modernity. For every shot of the House of Parliament there is one of City Hall, the Tower of London and the Swiss Re Tower. As Mark Bould has noted, a 2006 episode, "Fear Her," even features "the 2012 London Olympics in a not-yet-rebuilt Wembley Stadium" (2008: 224–5).

Just as often, however, this tour of London iconography is in for some violent treatment. Abetted by special effects company The Mill's CGI effects, the program has seen, for example, 10 Downing Street and Big Ben each destroyed, the Thames completely drained, and Buckingham Palace nearly smashed, then smashed, then no longer smashed (ah, time travel), by an alien deep space luxury cruise ship. At the very least, such urban violence demonstrates London's international standing, offering world-recognizable structures as worthy of computer-generated, science-fictional destruction as any in New York or Los Angeles or Paris. The program has taken similar brutal familiarities with the Prime Minister. No longer content, as in the old series, with merely palling around with the regional head of a secret United Nations taskforce, the new Doctor has been cozy with several Prime Ministers, seeing one killed, another rise and fall,[21] and still another elected, only to be revealed as his archrival, the Master.

This multilayered, complex signaling of national identity – "goofy" but well-budgeted, nostalgic but modern, affectionate but destructive – has largely succeeded in attracting a national audience to the program. If the BBC has reunited the family in front of the television, it has done so across the nation. The return of *Doctor Who* easily beat its main competitor, ITV (and all other competition as well) in number of viewers, allowing BBC One to win its Saturday evening timeslot on frequent occasions for the first time in years (Sherwin 2005). By the fourth series the program continued to average nearly 8 million viewers. The debut of that series, for example, again beat ITV, garnering 8.4 million viewers and just under 40 percent of the television viewing audience, despite a move to an earlier 6.15 p.m. time slot on Saturday (Brand Republic News Release 2008). To a *Los Angeles Times* writer in London, at least, this means that "*Doctor Who* appears – at least to a displaced foreigner – to be the most visible of Britain's current pop culture commodities" (Pollet 2008: 30). Taken together, such measurements of audience share are significant not merely for their reputed accuracy, but because even for public service broadcasters, they are the currency of the industry. The BBC, by the television industry's own criteria, was successfully playing the ratings game with its new offering, presumably bringing a large, national audience together in front of its public service broadcast. It has done so by offering a complicated but familiar reminder of shared experience, past and (now, again) present.

As a result, Davies himself has been hailed, tongue only slightly in cheek, as "the man who resurrected a piece of British heritage, a key part of our mythology" (Moran 2008: 2). *Doctor Who*'s quintessential British-ness serves as a clear mark of national distinction. This is of course precisely what the BBC wants to be understood to be offering to the pubic as a national cultural institution and public service. It is clear that no one involved in the production would ever describe the program as essentially international, the way those involved with, for example, *Highlander* have. Despite the new *Doctor Who* being shot in Wales, partially co-financed by Canada, and licensed in Australia, New Zealand, the US, and much the rest of the world, *Doctor Who* is simply British.

Who in the world

Nevertheless such reminders of the uniquely British character of the production have the benefit of marking the program as distinct within the realm of the global marketplace. While British television may not be

the most exorbitantly budgeted or even cinematically lush on offer, one thing it *can* offer the world is authentic Britishness. For many people – particularly who share the language, or share a colonial past relation – that is cultural capital still very much of interest. It is precisely with Britishness as a unique marketing distinction that the BBC (and BBC Worldwide – the commercial, international distribution unit of the BBC[22]) proceeded with *Doctor Who*'s regeneration. As Julie Gardner recalls: "We were talking about the show having universal appeal but being very British, and part of that universal appeal was about iconic London ... So you could do those iconic shots, you could do Trafalgar Square, those Parliament buildings, a tourist's idea of London, a London little kids get excited by" (quoted in Russell 2006: 50). It is a program specifically designed to be uniquely British both at home and abroad. As a result, it is this specific program, rather than the program's format, that is sold internationally. Unlike *Strictly Come Dancing*, *Life on Mars*, or *What Not to Wear*, there is no licensed, parallel *Doctor Who* being shot in various locations around the world, like, say, the US, where NBC's *Dancing with the Stars*,[23] ABC's *Life on Mars*, or TLC's *What Not to Wear,* have all aired (Moran & Malbon 2006; Straubhaar 2007). The same, quintessentially British episodes seen on BBC One are shown in the US (on the commercial cable SciFi – now Syfy – channel as well as BBC America) and more than 40 additional "territories."

All this has got more than little kids excited. The Doctor's regeneration very soon sparked international television sales in nations as diverse as the US, Thailand, and Japan. In both Canada and Belgium it is aired by two different broadcasters. In South Korea it became the first UK drama series sold to a Korean public station and the first to air in a prime-time slot. By 2007 43 "so-called 'territories' " were running the new *Doctor Who*, each paying up to £1 million per series. Trade reports noted that "Global TV sales were BBC Worldwide's most profitable business last year with the pull of the Doctor being a big part of that." With DVDs, toys, watches, audiobooks and other merchandising, this distribution was not limited to program episodes. *Doctor Who* books, alone, were worth £4.4 million in 2007 (Stephenson 2008: 10; see also Clark 2008a). All in all, as a spokeswoman for BBC Worldwide put it, *Doctor Who* "is not only a commercial success in territories but it has also helped to reinvigorate the international appetite for contemporary British drama" (Stephenson 2006: 10). Here, then, is another reason for the BBC to point toward *Doctor Who* amid television in transition.

Yet, to facilitate such international circulation the program has needed to compromise some of its unique-ness. Many of these compromises are minor, but noteworthy given the BBC's need to set itself apart from commercially-funded endeavors. For example, while most new BBC dramas are commissioned for a series of six episodes, in the case of *Doctor Who* "at the suggestion of BBC Worldwide, this quickly became thirteen episodes, more attractive to overseas buyers but far more than would normally have been commissioned by the BBC" (Russell 2006: 20). As significantly, the new *Doctor Who*, in keeping with most current BBC drama productions, was produced as approximately 45-minute episodes. While such time considerations leave an additional 15 minutes every hour for the non-commercial BBC to contend with, they fit perfectly on the temporally rigid schedules of commercial broadcasters around the world who fill the additional minutes with advertising. The unusual original series format of extended multi-part stories (what Tulloch and Alvarado (1983: 227) called the "non-discrete yet episodic" format of the program, in which one story would typically be stretched out over four to six 25-minute episodes[24]) meanwhile was replaced with primarily stand-alone episodes incorporating only elements of ongoing serialization, complying with current practices of episodic seriality. Justifying this change from the old format, Davies recalls, "I just pointed out that if they looked at all the American shows running, none of those did it that way. You might have a few two-parters, I said, halfway through and at the end, but I wouldn't start with one and I wouldn't make the majority of them like that" (quoted in Russell 2006: 21).

More significantly, in order to regenerate *Doctor Who*, it was one thing to appear occasionally "goofy" and "homemade," it was quite another to appear consistently shoddy. This, however, was one lingering memory of the original series. While determined to remain quintessentially British, the regenerated program would also have to compete at home and abroad with American quality television productions. As James Chapman explains about AQTV, "This is a term applied to popular fictions, including both fantasy and realist genres, characterized by their high production values, glossy visual style, literate scripts and psychologically realist characterizations" particularly if such programs also exhibited "self-consciousness . . . and [a] re-imagining of established genres for a postmodern culture" (Chapman 2006: 185). Such programming was very much on the minds of those involved in *Doctor Who*'s regeneration. Indeed, Julie Gardner recalls, "It was a really exciting time for those shows, and we talked about what we could learn from them, what we liked, and why Britain wasn't making things like that" (quoted in Russell

2006: 23). Russell T. Davies similarly recalls that he began writing for the new *Doctor Who* while in a very particular state of mind: "loving *Angel* but preferring *Buffy*, seeing elements of both in *Smallville*" (quoted in Russell 2006: 35). Davies has widely cited *Buffy* in particular as a model for the new *Doctor Who*,[25] telling the *Sunday Herald*, for example, that "It's important to learn from the wonderful work Americans have done in recent years, with shows like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. There is a strong emotional content to fantasy stories now" (quoted in Phelan 2005: 6; see also Appleyard 2005; Chapman 2006). Elsewhere Davies concluded that "that's what makes this updated, 21st century *Doctor Who* work. If you want to believe in it, you can, just as you can believe in *Buffy* and *Smallville*" (quoted in Edge 2005: 16). Such influences did not go unnoticed, as *The Observer*, at least, complimented the British program's "clever imitation of US hits such as Buffy and Angel: a mixture of smart, ironic humour and creepy horror" (McKie 2005: 13). Thus the BBC was able to demonstrate its ability to produce programming comparable to (indeed in some ways borrowed from) popular US quality television shows in the context of a family show once known for its shoddy production values.

In order to afford a "quality" television production of this kind, the program sought additional funding from overseas contributors such as Canada, where the program has subsequently aired on CBC ever since.[26] It also fulfilled one of the BBC's newly clarified mandates to produce more programming outside the M25 by locating primary production facilities in Cardiff – a move that not only expanded BBC production outside London,[27] but also facilitated easier and less expensive location shooting in the smaller Welsh city.[28] At a reported cost of £900,000 to £1.2m per episode (accounts vary) in the first season, the new, co-funded, Wales-produced *Doctor Who* was placed quite clearly in the upper echelon of BBC drama production budgets.[29]

The BBC also signaled it was serious about the quality of the new *Who* through the staff selected to bring it back to the small screen. Unlike the original series, but in keeping with later 1990s and early 2000s quality television production, this production was to be an "authored" drama. Russell T. Davies (*Queer as Folk*,[30] *Second Coming*) was brought aboard to produce, write, and, in a sense much more typical of US productions, become the program's "showrunner" (Cornea 2009). Additional episodes have been written by some of the leading television writers of Great Britain, such as Steven Moffat (*Coupling*), Mark Gatiss (*The League of Gentlemen*), and Matthew Graham (*Life on Mars*). While it is no

coincidence that all of these writers (Davies included) were great fans of *Doctor Who* as children before becoming television writers, it was also clear that the Doctor's image would no longer be "a bit shoddy and silly." As Davies told reporters when the new program was initially confirmed by the BBC, "I'm aiming to write a full-blooded drama embracing the heritage at the same time as introducing the character to a modern audience" (Davies quoted in Smith 2003: 2). This was done by producing the program with an American-style showrunner and AQTV attributes in a format more easily amenable to local broadcasting practices around the world.

In the fictional world of the new *Doctor Who*'s "somewhat nostalgic interpretation of modern power politics" (Byrne 2005: 13), Great Britain is always the first site of every alien attack, it runs its own missile defense system and secret anti-invasion army, its culture is one of diverse cosmopolitan multiculturalism, and it is at the center of the world – graphically, narratively, and socio-politically. In the real world of post-network global television, Great Britain is supplying its home audience and the territories with quintessentially British and yet internationally amenable twenty-first century quality television. Textually the program is careful and conscious to signal its unique cultural heritage in multiple ways. At the same time its production, its circulation, and its competition have meant that the program is no longer nearly as unique nor culturally specific as its previous iteration. This is the price and the result of the BBC's emergency temporal shift.

A *Doctor Who* Hero

> "Doctor Who" is the best drama format in the world because it involves a 900-year-old alien who joins up with an ordinary girl from London in 2005, and together they go on adventures in time and space. They save the world but in the process they also save themselves. (Julie Gardner[31])

> He's always moving through time. He's never at home. That struck me as quite sad and quite resonant for our times. He's the idealistic, humane alien, isn't he? And this must be something to do with his desire to belong. (Christopher Eccleston on his interpretation of the Doctor[32])

> Can I just say, traveling with you? – I love it! (Rose Tyler to the Doctor[33])

What kind of hero would this regeneration of the Doctor produce? *Doctor Who* was fulfilling a public service by returning a fondly-regarded bit of

cultural heritage to the airwaves and thereby uniting in twenty-first century British television programming an otherwise fragmenting public – the television audience as family, nation, and world. Who was the hero at the center of such a program? On the one hand, the Doctor embodies lonely nostalgia for the loss of his home, his world, his people. On the other hand, the new *Doctor Who* constantly emphasizes the joy of unrestricted mobility – traveling through space and time, encountering new worlds, getting involved in all manner of universally significant adventures – as an alternative to the humdrum of everyday life for a shop girl, a medical student, and a temp. Temporal and spatial mobility is both literalized and exaggerated in this science fiction program. It is offered – if only as an entertaining fantasy – to viewers worldwide as a modern, nostaligic British adventure.

The new Doctor, however, presented significant narrative challenges for the BBC to overcome before offering its mid-twentieth-century hero to the twenty-first century. The combination of enormous narrative buildup with the lengthy period since new episodes last aired on television presented challenges for a program explicitly attempting to reunite families around the television on Saturday evenings. How to maintain continuity with the original program while not alienating a substantial portion of the audience not yet even born when that program last aired? The *Sunday Times* put it in term of mobility: "The new *Doctor Who* has an impossible brief: to be in two places at once. It's been made at the insistence of an audience of ghosts, adults who wish to be reminded of childhood and a lot of real children who've never seen it before, have no idea what a police box is, but have grown up with Star Trek, Star Wars, and The Lord of the Rings" (Gill 2005: 12). Russell T. Davies' answer to this quandary was not to reinvent the character or premise, nor to simply cut out the significant narrative buildup already acquired, but rather to suggest that during the 16 years the program had not broadcast new episodes on television, an additional history had accrued for the character that would be new to all viewers and only incrementally revealed – it would be new, nostalgic, and continuing. This was the program's narrative answer to the regeneration of a familiar and favored hero, defined (appropriately enough) through temporal travel. It was about time.

This additional history – a backstory invented to manage paradigmatic narrative buildup – would accomplish three things for the regeneration of the classic program: 1) It would add new popular genres from which the program could draw. It would imbue the Doctor, his situation, and the

narrative with heightened human emotions, contributing – as with American quality television – melodrama to the original program's science-fiction premise. 2) It would "humanize" the program, placing greater narrative investment in the Doctor's traveling companions, as they now served as both the viewer's textual surrogate and also engaged with the Doctor emotionally. 3) It offered a backstory to be newly discovered by returning viewers and new viewers equally, redefining the character of the Doctor while placing all viewers of the new program on equal footing regarding access to the narrative (and allowing writers freedom from extensive narrative buildup). Each of these would draw on characteristic traits of the original program while updating *Doctor Who* for the realities of twenty-first century, global television. The Doctor and his program would travel around the world, expanding their value by lifting the barriers artificially imposing temporal scarcity. This would, ultimately, be a recognizable Doctor who was also ready to play on contemporary televisions around the world.

The first textual addition to the new program, therefore, consisted of recognizable melodramatic genre components. In particular, Davies has suggested, "The biggest difference you will see from the old *Doctor Who* is that this show has emotional content. . . . Awe, wonder, darkness, danger – in our version, these things will be really felt" (Cooke 2005: 1). This emotional content represents not only a change from the old program, but a textual mainstreaming of the new program. Melodrama – as the previous chapters have indicated – is now a typical element of internationally circulating, quality drama. As Davies confesses, it is "a really weird thing to be saying about drama because I can't think of any other programme where you'd consciously have to say, 'Let's add some emotion in there,' because most drama is already about emotions. *Doctor Who* really wasn't before, but I wasn't just going to write spaceships and robots and stuff like that" (quoted in Russell 2006: 30). Beyond Davies' own writing proclivities, the regenerated program offers both spatial and temporal *affect* precisely to compel the sustained interest of a demographically diverse audience. While the new *Doctor Who* is narrated through primarily self-contained episodes, the introduction of melodramatic genre traits allows it – again, as with the programs in the previous chapters (some of which served as inspiration for these changes) – to introduce serial elements meant to sustain viewer investment across multiple episodes.

In addition, however, an "emotional connection" with the primary characters is typically understood to make these characters more

"accessible," leading to greater viewer investment in them and their narrative exploits. For a program intent on regenerating family viewing, this is a crucial textual feature. At the same time, the introduction of melodramatic components has changed the nature of the program and the nature of the Doctor. For the program, it means something rather less unique, rather more like American quality television programs. For the program's hero, it means that while "the tone of the series was optimistic, it was romantic, it was about adventure" now, as not quite before, "most importantly, the show was about what it is to be human" (Russell 2006: 36). The Doctor, in reaching out to all members of the family, has become more emotional, more human, more "accessible." While this emphasis on human emotion has resulted in some genuinely touching scenes and different kinds of narrative affective access to the characters, it also has the effect of substantially limiting the kinds of meanings available to the new program. The Doctor – once a frequently baffling, emotionally distant eccentric – is now both more human and more of a comic book superhero. Every narrative now returns to emotional human connections. For television drama meant to unite families, unite a nation, and circulate around the world, an emphasis on the universal human condition makes strategic textual sense. For quirky science-fiction with a lengthy and complex narrative buildup, this can be limiting (particularly for stories to touch on specific contemporary conditions).

One striking change this new emphasis clearly indicates is the program's use and depiction of the Doctor's human (they're now all human) traveling companions. This is clear at the very start of the first episode of the new series. The very first episode, "Rose," encouraged focalization through Rose's narrative point of view – we viewers are aligned with her. She functions initially as our surrogate, so that we might all be introduced together to *Doctor Who*'s regeneration. As such, she is pleasant, bright, attractive, but leading a terribly normal, (narratively) uninteresting life. When we first encounter the animated mannequins (the Autons), it is through her eyes. When we first encounter the Doctor, it is through her eyes. When he tells her that he is an alien, she is the one to ask him why then does he speak as if he's from the north ("lots of planets have a north" he explains). When they have a moment to contemplate the TARDIS, it is she who actually asks "what's a police call box?" (the last ones were taken off the streets of London in 1968). So while the episode, by focusing first upon the young woman, initially resembles *Doctor Who*'s other first episode, "The Unearthly Child" (which began with Susan's point of

view), it soon becomes clear that unlike Susan, Rose is experiencing all this for the first time. Rose is not herself an uncanny character; instead she experiences the uncanny and the fantastic as our surrogate guide. Her role, like many of the companions that followed Susan, is to ask the questions that allow the Doctor to engage in exposition, particularly as this is the introduction of a new series to a new audience. She helps make the program narratively accessible.

Rose's second role is quite different from most of her companion predecessors. In the age of Buffy and Xena, Rose's primary narrative role is not simply to get into trouble and scream until the Doctor saves her (although she does on occasion). Nearly as often, she manages to assist the Doctor, or even save him. Rose has developed significantly from average shop girl to heroic, self-possessed galactic hero. Perhaps still as our surrogate, her time with the Doctor has romantically (in all senses) opened her eyes to a larger universe and transformed her into something of a role model, along the lines of Buffy, no longer capable of being satisfied with her prior, normal life. Such a pattern, with variations, is played out with the Doctor's subsequent companions as well, all of who acquire a social-justice, universe-historical perspective, and a personal sense of greater destiny over the course of their adventures with The Doctor. As the first and most fondly treated, Rose proves a quick study and finds her affection for space and time travel (as it might be hoped of the audience) is rivaled only by her growing fondness for the Doctor. She helps make the program aspirationally accessible.

Her third significant and unprecedented new role as companion intersects with the first change to the program, the emphasis on emotion. Unlike any of her predecessors, Rose added a new element to the program through her growing sexual/romantic attraction to the Doctor (even across his regeneration from ninth incarnation Christopher Eccleston to David Tennant's tenth Doctor). Moreover, there are clear suggestions that this love is not unrequited. This new element of melodramatic "emotional realism" offers interest to some audience groups (some members of the family), as an additional point of entry into the program for those intrigued by the potential relationship and therefore further affectively invested in the program's narrative development of its personal, melodramatic, serial components (will they/won't they? does he/can he? etc.). The first four series of the program have therefore offered some genuinely touching moments between Doctor and companion. She helps make the program emotionally accessible.

The Doctor meanwhile, is also changing through his relationships with his traveling companions. The program's newly invented backstory finds the Doctor believing himself to be the only survivor of a great, galactic war, having in the process lost his home planet, his fellow Time Lords, his civilization. Narratively, then, his adventures alongside human companions have slowly allowed him to again entertain the possibility of hope and to suggest new reasons for enduring. Such is the developing serial narrative of this character offered to the viewing families of Great Britain over the course of many action-filled episodes. This new serially developing component of The Doctor's character, however, defines him almost exclusively through and against his human traveling companions. Quite unlike any of the other heroes discussed in this book, The Doctor is presented as essentially unknowable. His masculinity – indeed his entire identity – is, in all respects, alien, accessible and knowable only through his relationships with his companions. We know him to the extent that his companions offer us access. This presents us with a rather unusual hero.

Many of his grandest actions, as protagonist and hero, are primarily motivated by relationships with his companions. His sense of self, his masculinity, his human qualities are presented to viewers only as they are reflected off of his companions. At the same time he is much more apt to act and initiate a chain of cause and effect narrative events rather than merely respond to others' nefarious actions than any of the other heroes discussed in this book. Duncan MacLeod does not actively seek out other immortals to fight, but reluctantly faces them when he is challenged. Clark Kent is occasionally distracted from his meditations on his own destiny by "meteor freaks" and other supervillains, but does not typically actively seek them out. Jack Bauer is thrust into continuous action by the machinations of bureaucracies and villains, not of his own volition. Only The Doctor actively travels about time and space, poking his nose into other people's (and non-peoples') doings.

Defining the character through and against his mostly female traveling companions has had the further result of newly imagining this Doctor as sexualized in ways that were inconceivable for the first seven Doctors. A British newspaper, for example, described Eccleston's Doctor as "a craggily good-looking bit of trouser with a fine line in leather jackets" (McKie 2005: 13). Tennant's Doctor, meanwhile, sports mod-suits cut too tight in a fashion Tennant has described as "geek chic." The sexy, flirtatious Doctor stands quite apart from the earlier show when even the "dishy" Peter Davidson was still, ultimately, "an objective, asexual saviour-explorer – a

scientist whose only greed is for knowledge – a man who's out neither for himself nor for a bit of the Other – a post-gendered gunless wonder'' (Charles 2007: 117). Or, as Janet Fielding (who played former companion Tegan Jovanka) once quipped about the Doctor's sexual essence, ''two hearts and no dick'' (quoted in Phelan 2005: 6). The new Doctor, meanwhile, flirts with his companions, their mothers, and even tells William Shakespeare that matters are so dire they'll have to wait to ''have a good flirt later'' (to which the Bard replies ''Is that a promise, Doctor?'' and the Doctor notes that ''Oh, 57 academics just punched the air!''[34]) (''The Shakespeare Code'').

If the Doctor is turned increasingly human, dick and all, by these new emotional characteristics, the program does manage to use sexuality to destabilize fixed identity categories,[35] including for brief moments, the Doctor's own masculinity. This is first a function of even allowing for the possibility of sexuality and the suggestion (if yet to be followed through) of alien sexuality. Carried further, the implied suggestion is that of interspecies love, as no matter how ''humanized'' by emotion, the Doctor remains an alien. Furthermore, the program has introduced additional recurring characters, such as sometimes companion and hero of the spin-off *Torchwood*, Captain Jack Harkness (John Barrowman), a fifty-first century, omni-sexual human, for whom, it is suggested, questions of gender or even species would simply not occur in his continuing pursuit of lovers across time and space. While the science-fiction conceit offers generic disavowal for family-hour viewing (and everything shown on screen is quite chaste), the nature of the Doctor's masculinity is nevertheless more often reasserted through acts of (or at least the clearly-presented temptation to act with) grim, determined violence than it is playfully opened to question.

In addition to Captain Jack, companions following Rose have included Catherine Tate's Donna Noble, who spent the fourth series as his equal in wit and banter and like him, as similarly existentially lost at the start of their travels together. In between, during the third series, the Doctor's ''rebound'' companion was Martha Jones, played by Freema Agyeman, who, born of an Iranian mother and Ghanian father, became ''the first ethnic minority companion in the 43-year television history of *Doctor Who*''[36] (Sherwin 2006: 5). Spending a furtive series together, Martha is the least initially lost companion. She nevertheless transforms herself upon leaving the Doctor, actively seeking to be involved in the fate of the world. Acknowledging that these characters and this casting further fulfills the

BBC's pubic service mandate to represent all of Great Britain in all its diversity, the third series' penultimate episode, "The Sound of Drums," has the Master (John Simm) – while monitoring the Doctor, Captain Jack, and Martha on a television surveillance screen – quip to the Doctor "you and your little band. Which by the way is ticking every demographic box. So, congratulations on that. But there you are." Such scenes occurred amid national charges that the BBC was "hideously white" and with "BBC bosses saying that a 'diversity deficit' is driving away younger audiences" (Sherwin 2006: 5). Within this context, through and against his "little band," the heroic Doctor is intended for (and to unite) multiple fragments of the public. At the same time, it is only through this context that he can be known at all. In order to reassert his significance, the program has defined him strictly in terms of others.

Tulloch and Alvarado note that "one discursive practice of [the original] *Doctor Who* is its cultural perspectivism" based on the Doctor's privileged viewpoint as an intellectually superior individual with a vantage "outside the historical worlds of social, racial, and sexual stratification which he visits, and from which their moral values can be criticized"[37] (Tulloch & Alvarado 1983: 113–14). While this position may contain echoes of the liberal colonial ideal, it is not quite the cosmopolitanism imagined within the context of neo-liberalism. Indeed it is what makes the Doctor so alien, so apparently – from Davies' point of view – without emotion and inaccessible. It exceeds the fantasy of being at home in every place and no place, acknowledging its privileged perspective comes precisely from nowhere.

From this position, however, the Doctor's presence was frequently rendered as itself sufficient to motivate progressive (if not always radical) change in the cultures he visited. His mere presence as an intellectually superior outsider served as a recurring catalyst to provoke change within the societies he visited. Moreover, the Doctor's first seven regenerations were motivated by a love of (his and all) life, an insatiable curiosity, and a delight in the secrets of space and time (see, for example, McKee 2007). His genuine (if arrogant) disappointment in the universe's injustices led to authentic outrage at tyranny and senseless death. Unlike Duncan MacLeod, it could not be claimed of the Doctor that he had never done anything to change the world. He had clearly changed many worlds. Not quite cosmopolitan, the Doctor, in his arrogance and eccentricity, was the perennial outsider, never fitting in anywhere, never at home, never particularly interested to be. If his semiotic function was politically suspect for being reassuring (Fiske 1983), his narrative function was to propose

that intelligence and perspective can effect progress. Yet the more emotionally accessible this quintessentially British iconic Time Lord becomes, the more universally human his stories, the less special his odd, alien, outsider perspective.

This regeneration of the Doctor, unlike the heroes in previous chapters, is not so much clinging to some remaining sense of self amid retreating markers of identity as he is reinventing himself to adapt to radically new conditions of existence. He has already lost his identity, suffered unimaginable injuries in a galactic war, and suffered through defeat, death, and regeneration. In order to inspire new forms of old-fashioned collective viewing, the BBC has regenerated a damaged hero who relies on select members of an average and diverse British public to help him pursue evidence to mark the "sort of man" he is (becoming). He ends up the composite of those who surround (and watch) him.

For all his quintessential Britishness, then, the Doctor is incrementally losing his particular cultural perspectivism. As the BBC has adapted to television in transition by borrowing practices from commercial broadcasters, *Doctor Who* has borrowed traits to circulate and signify more like American Quality Television, and the Doctor has adopted accessible characteristics of his human companions. This accessibility places him within the historical world of politics, sex, and difference, rather than morally and critically outside. Both the program and the Doctor appear now more familiar, more translatable, more adaptable. The Doctor's overriding motivation is no longer his own peculiar delight and curiosity, his own (privileged, outsider) abhorring of injustice, or his own significant presence in different cultures and societies. His overriding concern now seems to be his small audience of companions, to whom he'd like to show the universe, and from whom he seems to detect the possibility for his own salvation. This is the twenty-first century Doctor, brought to us by twenty-first century British public service, publicly funded, television.

CONCLUSION
Do We Need Another Hero?

> *The world is a very big and scary place now. So I started to think about what's missing. And what was missing was the idea of heroes. (Tim Kring, creator of* Heroes[1]*)*

In 2006 NBC Universal's CEO, Jeff Zucker, announced a new promotional and programming initiative for his consistently fourth-place network, dubbed "TV 360" (Fisher 2006). A tacit acknowledgement by one of the original "big three" networks that television had changed and the old strategies were no longer working, TV 360 meant a "full-circle" approach to promoting and distributing NBC content. It was intended to be part of a broad digital presence for NBC on the internet (concurrent with acquiring iVillage, launching the ill-fated DOTCOMEDY.com, etc.). NBC programming would be cross-promoted over multiple web, mobile and other outlets with references, outtakes, promotions, easily distributable mini episodes (mobisodes, webisodes, etc.) etc., all circling "around" the program and the network. The idea was to promote television offerings and build up the audience while also finding alternative sources of revenue. For traditional television programming, the most significant implication was Zucker's policy that new shows pitched to the network include digital strategies along with character and plot ideas. Zucker told the trade journal *Television Week* that year that "what it really means is producers can no longer just come in with a TV show. It has to have an online component, a sell-through component and a wireless component. It's the way we're trying to do business on the content side, giving the consumer ways to watch their show however they want to watch it" (quoted in Lafayette 2006). As NBC Universal's chief digital officer would soon summarize the strategy: "We believe in ubiquity distribution" (Littleton 2007).

The idea of dispersing network television programming (or components thereof) across multiple distribution platforms – even to the point of ubiquity – was certainly not new by this point, but making it a requirement in order to aggregate an overall audience (rather than simply promote the primary television program) prior to even pitching a show idea was radical for a major broadcast network. If followed through, TV 360 would take the new temporal expansion of television programming to its logical limits, requiring the proposal (and presumably the execution) of a new brand prior to any iteration of that brand, effectively producing the ancillary before the "original." New program pitches were to be full circle, in other words encompassing all media, ancillary, and marketing possibilities prior to there being anything to produce, license or promote. If the BBC had resorted to an emergency temporal shift, then the implication of TV 360 was that of temporal inversion: begin with the (abstract) brand, then produce the (material) properties to substantiate it.

Among the first dramas to be pitched to NBC under these new conditions was *Heroes*, a narratively sophisticated, "quality" program featuring an ensemble cast of ethnically diverse characters who discover they have super powers. Series creator Tim Kring later recalled that "I'm sort of a student of television, and it doesn't take a genius to figure out that things are changing quickly. Production costs are going up. We're losing eyeballs. We have to reach people in other ways" (Kushner 2007). In an early cover story on the cultural and ratings success of *Heroes*, the venerable promotional mouthpiece *Entertainment Weekly* noted that when Kring first pitched his idea for a superhero show to NBC, he therefore "laid out an entire franchise specifically engineered for obsessive consumers who are deeply engaged with their favorite TV shows." (Jensen 2007). NBC Entertainment President Kevin Reilly recalled, in the same article, that "it was pretty clear he [Kring] hadn't just cooked it up on the car ride over." Kring had in mind an elaborate distribution model for the series, well beyond mere episodic airings on television. Moreover, Kring was aware that NBC's interest in the show would be at least partially contingent on elaborating such a model. Thus, he later noted, "when I pitched *Heroes*, I knew an important element to getting on air was how it can incorporate the internet" (Kushner 2007). The afterlife of the program had to be accounted for before the program even had a life.

To that end Kring and NBC envisioned original content on NBC.com, including digital comic-books (often with sponsors' product placement), cast and crew interviews and commentary, video clips and edited

two-minute episode summaries, fan art, cast photo galleries, trivia sent daily to your mobile phone, and even "surveillance footage" from the series' fictional Primatech Corporation headquarters (nbc.com/Heroes/; Carter 2006). One excited review of the website put it in terms that must have pleased Kring and NBC, stating that the official *Heroes*' website "delivers an extraordinary experience for visitors through a presentation that mixes the show's comic book roots with multimedia interactivity" (Szadkowski 2006).

While such a promotional website, even if quite elaborate in this case, is hardly new, *Heroes* also featured a second website, launched well before the series pilot first aired. Used to generate fan interest, this second website (9thwonders.com) borrowed from previously successful ploys, such as the ABC series *Lost*, by offering an official fan site (for *Lost* it was Fuselage.com). This secondary site was run by the creator of yet another innovative-marketing official fan site, for *Smallville*. The *Heroes* site offered "striking design that looks like pages from a beaten-up old comic book" (Szadkowski 2006). It has featured commentary and interviews from the show's writers, series news, multiple fan discussion forums and message boards, charity tie-ins, and artwork from Tim Sale (and colorist Dave Stewart), whose paintings are significant props in the program's first season[2] (Lisotta 2006). In close and conspicuous association with a corporate sponsor (Sprint), the site hosted a "Create Your Own Hero" promotion, in which fans could use their phone or internet connection to vote for traits for a new hero, whose changing characteristics were to be aired during a future episode. Beyond these official websites, an additional online presence included alternate-reality games; MySpace pages and blogs purportedly written by characters from the show; and ultimately the introduction of a female character whose superpower was the ability to interface bodily with the internet.[3] Some visitors to Yahoo.com were allowed to see video of the pilot episode prior to its airing on NBC.

Such efforts at a robust online presence began well before the pilot first premiered and anticipated the show's afterlife as a condition of NBC's ambitious marketing and also ultimate distribution of the new series. These marketing strategies not only recognized the fragmentation of primetime television audiences, but also sought to establish a presence for the television show on the internet. These efforts were successful to the extent that more than 60 fan-generated websites existed *before* the show had even debuted on television and Nielsen measured *Heroes*' "buzzmetrics" as the highest of all new shows in 2006 ("the most buzzed-about show").

Commenting on the success of this ubiquity marketing/distribution effort, NBC Universal Television Group chief marketing officer John Miller recalls "We were in print, radio, cable, everywhere, with a very consistent message: Ordinary people with extraordinary abilities" (Kaufman 2007).

Such growing ubiquity tied the show's initial success to broader institutional relations and outlets throughout the "new media" universe. Recent purchaser of pirated-video outlet YouTube, Google was hired to run an online campaign for the program, placing ads "on fan sites, comic book and sci-fi destinations and other sites, employing display spots that specifically urged users to watch the show on NBC on Monday nights" (Lafayette 2007). Elsewhere, NBC ran a covert "viral" campaign online, using the reputation of sites such as YouTube (and others) for leniency with intellectual property protections, to make available episodes of something called "Zeroes." Vince Manze, the NBC Agency creative director[4] behind the once-meaningful Thursday night promotional hook "Must-See TV," produced what the trade journal *Variety* later described as "a roughly two-minute sendup of the Peacock's hugely popular Monday night drama 'Heroes.' The spoof has been widely passed around via the internet, racking up more than 1.5 million views on YouTube, Break.com and other sites earlier this winter" (Adalian 2007). While even viral advertising was not new for television by this time, in the case of the NBC promotional spot, "unlike most other network-created viral videos, 'Zeroes' contained not a trace of evidence that it came from NBC. No Peacock logo. No 'Tune in Mondays at 9' message at the end. No credits whatsoever" (Adalian 2007). *Variety* reported that even Tim Kring was kept out of the loop about "Zeroes" actual origin at NBC. These clandestine efforts were seen as important because "Keeping the clip's origins a secret was a means of building up its credibility with potential viewers." Thus, as Manze explain, "It was an experiment. We wanted to see how far we could go, and we wondered if (audience) knowing we did it would be a detriment" (Adalian 2007). Such concerns indicate the unease with which television seeks out younger audiences, who "more and more, are abandoning primetime in favor of sites like YouTube" (Adalian 2007).

At the same time, the low-budget (approx $17,000), clandestine viral appeal of the show's promotion actually stands in contrast to the show itself, which has forsaken an emphasis on special-effects laden demonstrations of superpowers in order to focus the show's budget on the creation of an overall "cinematic," lush, big budget look. As *Heroes* creator Tim

Kring explains, "spending the money on creating a cinematic-looking character drama spared 'Heroes' from being pigeonholed as a narrower sci-fi genre show" (Debruge 2007). With the "Zeroes" clip just "one of dozens, if not hundreds" of NBC viral promotional videos circulating, *Variety* dryly noted that "Even as Peacock lawyers threaten YouTube with lawsuits, the net's marketing department has been looking for ways to get the attention of younger viewers" (Adalian 2007). Indeed, such contradictory impulses inform all levels of television programming today.

In the case of *Heroes*, the marketing and distribution ubiquity and planned wide-ranging afterlife of the series were not simply a matter of utilizing every conceivable trick of the internet. *Heroes* would exist beyond the original airings as well in a comic-book series derived from the webcomic, an official series magazine, the auctioning of Sale/Stewart artwork (more or less vaguely attributed to Isaac Mendez, a fictional character within the show), action figure toys based on characters, the carefully-timed distribution of each season in DVD box sets, a soundtrack album, a print novel featuring Hiro Nakamura (the first season's break-out, time & space altering character) and minor characters from the first season written in consultation and cooperation with the show's writers and creator, and a proposed (but then tabled) spin-off series (*Heroes: Origins*) involving the formation of new heroes, some of whom were to have appeared in the original series based on popularity.

In addition, there has also been an elaborate effort at sponsored product placement tie-ins. Product placement not only helped subsidize the show's budget, it helped market the show, as well as significantly contributing to this distribution ubiquity – creating a wide-ranging, recognizable brand out of thin air, as it were. As the trade journal *Advertising Age* has noted, corporate advertisers are no less flummoxed by the rapidly changing conditions of television than the television industry is (indeed the flummoxing of advertisers is a major reason the television industry is so concerned, experiencing these changes as a crisis) (Halliday 2007). Thus, experiments in creating "customized content" for particular programs' relationship to particular sponsors are increasing. As NBC Universal's president of sales and marketing has put it, "We need to evolve the ad structure" and "enhance the effectiveness of using our content for advertisers to deliver their messages" (Steinberg 2007). In the case of *Heroes*, for example, Nissan was seeking a "TV property the automaker could own with audiences through multiple media channels." A deal was worked out with *Heroes*, before its pilot had debuted, so that "Nissan was the only

advertiser during the premier episode, with its vehicles integrated in the show throughout the first hit season.'' A substantial narrative arc that first season, for example, had Hiro insisting that he and his friend Ando must drive only Nissan's then-new-to-North-America Versa hatchback cross country from Las Vegas to New York. Furthermore, Nissan promoted its relationship to *Heroes* on its own ''before the show's debut and worked with NBC for product integration in an online 'Heroes' comic book.'' Nissan also gave away more than 3 million co-branded iTunes cards so that early episodes might be downloaded to iPods for free. Finally, ''Nissan also had a major presence on the 'Heroes' area of NBC.com, with a link to Nissan's site'' (Halliday 2007). Over the first season of *Heroes*, ''Nissan's product placement planner . . . worked closely with the show's producers to place vehicles in 10 episodes'' (Graser 2007a). Clearly mutually advantageous, a new deal was brokered for the show's second season. *Daily Variety* suggests that ''Overall [the] deal essentially gives ''Heroes'' the kind of marketing muscle that a feature film might receive from promotional partnerships with brands brokered by the studios.'' In addition to sponsoring the first episode of the first two seasons and thus reducing the number of advertisement breaks,[5] Nissan ''roadblocked'' the premiere episode online on NBC Rewind for 24 hours after its on-air debut, paid for ''on-air and online sponsorships and traditional ads, wireless applications, as well as a ''Heroes'' musicvid and the season-one DVD release'' (Graser 2007a).

In return for these efforts, the carmaker received significant ''product integration'' into the program's visuals and narrative. In addition to Hiro and Ando's Versa, which was featured, spoken about by name in dialogue, and illustrated in diegetically featured comic books, the Nissan Armada SUV and Altima sedan were also conspicuously featured in various episodes. In the second season, the cheerleader character, Claire Bennett, was given a brand new Nissan Rogue crossover vehicle to drive in early episodes. Indeed *Daily Variety* noticed that the debut of that new Nissan vehicle (in September 2007) ''times well with the fall's new TV programming'' (Graser 2007a). The trade journal *AdWeek*, meanwhile, suggested that ''Nissan and NBC's multi-platform deal, . . . pretty much covers every touchpoint, cliché or buzzword you can come up with,'' with ubiquity extending beyond television into print, digital, video, and gaming (Lippert 2007).

Beyond Nissan, *Heroes* worked with additional sponsors to finance, promote, and encourage a healthy transmedia life and afterlife for the

program. For example, NBC expanded a deal with MobiTV to offer on-demand television shows including *Heroes* to US wireless users. For two dollars (or a rate set by the wireless carrier), *Heroes* fans had a 24-hour window in which to watch an episode on their mobile phone (Gibbs 2007). Wireless provider Sprint, meanwhile, sponsored the "Create Your Hero" promotion effort in which viewers use their mobile phone or the internet to vote for traits a new hero should have. While these are constantly updated, the transforming hero was to appear during airings of the show on NBC. Moreover, this promotion was seen as a way of keeping viewers' eyes from wandering from advertising amid increasing clutter. Sprint would run a 15-second message at the start of an ad break ("drawn in comic-book colors") asking viewers to stick around. Following a regular Sprint ad, a longer promo would explain how to participate in "Create Your Hero." Such "hybrid"[6] spots, *Advertising Age* suggests, mean that "before the unwitting couch potato knows it, he [sic] is smack dab in the midst of a commercial break" (Steinberg 2007). Finally, in an arrangement that mirror-echoes the actual point of TV 360, creating marketable, profitable branding prior to any actual substantive text, *Daily Variety* reported in the Summer of 2007 that Richard Branson's "Virgin America has lined up its in-flight entertainment, with movies and TV shows from NBC Universal joining offerings from Disney, Fox, Paramount and Warner Bros. The only thing it doesn't have yet is minor details like flight routes, schedules and fares." As the entertainment industry trade journal explained, Virgin America "aims to use entertainment as a way to differentiate itself from other low-fare airlines like Southwest and JetBlue." The deal with NBC, it mentioned, included *Heroes*. Perhaps just as significant, at least as far as the television industry is concerned, in this deal "Not only do the studios and networks get paid licensing fees for their content, Virgin America's in-flight system, dubbed Red, also will create a new promotional outlet for upcoming projects. In-flight technology will enable movies to be paused, rewound or fast forwarded, just like a digital video recorder. Systems also will enable flyers to chat with others onboard, as well as order food via the screens" (Graser 2007b). This was the full-circle treatment, indeed!

The fact that *Heroes* was successful in the ratings (and around the water cooler) in its first season, therefore, "came as a surprise in some quarters; but NBC, putting more marketing effort behind *Heroes* than any other fall series, had pegged it ... as its best hope." According to NBC Universal "integrated media" executive Beth Comstock, speaking at the 2007

Consumer Electronics Show, ''What marketers want is the ability to reach 'Heroes' fans in as many places as they can. It's a packaging opportunity for us. It's rare that a marketer comes to us who doesn't want a mix of media.'' For TV 360, ''It's about pulling those pieces together'' (Littleton 2008). From this perspective, ubiquity marketing and distribution is a strategy for gathering together a composite audience from different places (and times) in order to replace the fabled mass audience of the network era. If you shoot it out there enough different ways, eventually enough different people will encounter it.

Going Global

> We can sit down together and say, ''This is what I need, this is what will travel.'' (Roma Khanna[7])

> We're constantly getting reminders of why you've got to be in these places.' (Referring to ''markets'' like India, in this case) (Pete Smith[8])

The scripted afterlife of *Heroes* continued beyond snazzy marketing efforts and ubiquity distribution. It also included the very make up of the show itself. In addition to characters who drive Nissans and interface with the internet, the show featured characters of strikingly diverse (for primetime US television) ethnic, racial, cultural, and national backgrounds. Following the traditional network strategy of demographically matching characters to desired audience segments, *Heroes*' casting was designed to open markets for the show around the globe. Commenting during a panel discussion in front of the NAACP and the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences in 2007 on the racial and ethnic diversity of the cast of *Heroes*, March Hirschfield, an NBC Universal executive vice president of casting noted that ''Diversity is at the forefront as we cast these projects. There's financial, empirical proof that it works'' (quoted in *Television Week* 2007). Suggesting both the practice and intent of such casting as well as above- and below-the-line hiring for *Heroes*, Kring recalls, ''we gave the speech (to our department heads) that this show is a cross section of the world, and we'd sure like our crew to look that way'' (quoted in Knolle 2006).

Importantly for *Heroes* and NBC Universal, the show's casting has not gone unnoticed by the foreign (i.e. based outside the US) press. As readers in Singapore considered, ''*Heroes* draws its inspiration from comics . . . But

it offered another pleasant surprise with its multi-culti casting choices.'' *The Straight Times* elaborates by noting that ''Two of its ensemble characters are Asian. Tokyo-born Masi Oka plays the aptly named Hiro Nakamura, a Japanese office worker who discovers he can control time and space. Hiro's storyline not only takes place in Tokyo for the first three episodes, but its dialogue is also entirely in Japanese, with English subtitles. Chicago native Sendhil Ramamurthy plays genetic scientist Mohinder Suresh, who leaves his native Madras for New York to solve the mystery of his father's death.'' For audiences outside the US, the unusualness of this casting is not lost at all. ''Consider this for a moment. Two Asian characters, one of them speaking mostly in his native tongue, occupying major plotlines in a television series in the United States. Not just any TV series but a successful primetime series. Heroes is the hit of the fall television season, earning NBC bragging rights with 14.4 million'' (Ong 2006).

Such perceptions are crucial to NBC Universal because,

> Among the big American media companies, NBC Universal was late to move into international markets, including emerging economies like India. Walt Disney has been a household name around the world for decades; the MTV network of Viacom was perhaps the defining American media brand for a more recent generation. But NBC Universal was not even created until 2004, when NBC, a largely domestic US television business owned by General Electric, was combined with Universal Studios and other units of Vivendi of France that were focused on the United States. (Pfanner 2007)

The strategy for catching up to competitors in the global marketing and distribution of television programming consisted of rapidly expanding existing channels and purchasing local channels in desirable markets. As the *Herald Tribune* points out, however, ''Simply having a lot of outlets is not enough, though, in a world where the number of television channels – not to mention new, digital forms of distribution – is growing day by day. You also have to have something to put on them.'' Programs specifically suited and readily translated to this new, international, ubiquity distribution model not only remained crucial, but were in greater demand than ever before. Visually spectacular, readily translatable narrative has grown in demand as the television outlets both expand and become globally encompassing. In this context, ''NBC Universal has had considerable success selling American television series like 'Heroes' in international markets at a time when American TV fare generally is experiencing a resurgence overseas'' (Pfanner 2007). Thus, to promote the release of the first season's

DVD set and the imminent start of the second season, Kring and his cast set out in the summer of 2007 on a *Heroes* world tour, visiting major cities in North America, Asia, and Europe. Following the mixed success of *Lost* and preceding *Flashforward*, *Heroes* seems to represent fairly well the major commercial broadcast networks' efforts to imagine their own version of heroes for the era of television in transition. These programs – and others like them – are characterized by big budgets, lavish production values, complex narratives and temporalities, multiple and diverse protagonists, and world-encompassing plots. The customization of heroic identity and viewing options and the shift towards diversity as a way to open global markets speak to the repertoire of textual features these broadcasters have put into play as they seek to (re)define the space and time of the future of television. Television producers around the world, meanwhile, continue seeking out the next great – or even simply pretty good – television hero (or heroes), planning the travels, scripting both the life and the afterlife, constructing brand identities, and imagining the transcendence – if not the impediments or the injuries – of these characters' biographies.

If "television" literally means seeing at a distance, however, the networks seem still to be coming to terms with the notion that this now includes temporal distance. As it turns out, the second season of *Heroes* was disappointing to fans and then cut short due to the Writers Guild of America labor action. Following this abbreviated second season, a third season on the still-spiraling NBC continued to bleed audiences as the program lost its cachet. The narrative's carefully sustained sense of hidden direction and meaningful revelation diminished after the first season, instead slipping over the fine line from narrative complexity to impenetrability. NBC, meanwhile, despite the early success of the *Heroes* TV 360 model, announced a number of dramatic changes to its programming. This culminated in the Spring 2009 declaration that it was largely ceding its formerly lucrative 10.00 p.m. time slot to experiment instead with displaced late-night talk show host Jay Leno stripped across week nights at that time. Zucker's public posturing hinted at a larger acquiescence to television's transition, while offering the broadcast network itself only the faintest praise: "Broadcast is very important to us, but there's no question cable is a superior business model" (quoted in Schneider 2009).

It is well worth remembering that as the child of radio still closely identified with broadcast signals, television has always been understood as essentially ephemeral. Television in transition represents the slow,

staggering acquiescence to a substantial shift in the assumptions and practices of television programming. Practices premised on an economy of scarcity are haphazardly responding to, but also helping to provoke, the conditions for the very different experience of an economy of abundance. An economy of scarcity still informs television's rigid, linear, greedy relationship to time. An economy of scarcity also still informs the television industry's claims on intellectual property ownership and control over content, use, and meaning. As a result of digitalization, deregulation, and globalization (accelerated by industry responses such as ubiquity distribution, interactivity, and fanning the flames of fandom), fragmented audiences in a multi-channel environment experience something much more like an economy of abundance. We can perhaps understand the afterlife of television programming as the site of encounter between what television was and what it will be. But what are the meanings that emerge from and what is the potential that lies in the tensions between these interrelated trends: the institutionally scripted afterlife (as a response to changing industry and technological conditions) and the unscripted afterlife (as a response to the experience and proliferation of textual meaning)?

The lives and afterlives of the four heroes in this book engage with precisely these questions. The international co-production *Highlander* presents the hero Duncan MacLeod as an immortal cosmopolitan negotiating retreating markers of identity and purpose, surviving perhaps into undifferentiation. Time Warner's *Smallville* offers Clark Kent, *not* Superman, improbably extending his youth to defer attenuation. The programming stunt *24* presents Jack Bauer fighting time itself to sustain a heroic sense of identity. *Doctor Who* regenerates the Doctor as a distinctly British offering amid an expanding world market and fragmenting local public.

These four are heroes of action for a moment of transition in television. They simultaneously inhabit the mixed-genres of an expanding multi-channel universe and the collapsing space/time of white masculinity as it encounters diminishing purchase on its universal signification. Scarred and wounded, heroic nonetheless, they inhabit elegiac narratives, pushing against limits they cannot ultimately transcend. The life and afterlife of these heroes trace negotiations with difference and repetition, time and space, the familiar and the limits of what will define the future of television.

NOTES

Chapter 1 Television in Transition

1 A formulation linking institutional and textual practices recognized by Betsy Williams (as "quasi-serial") (1994a) and labeled (in a slightly different context) by Tulloch and Alvarado (1983). Episodes tell complete stories and end conclusively within a single airing and bring the same characters and locations back for another, distinct, otherwise unrelated story in the next airing. Serials feature on-going narratives that bridge multiple episodes, continuing where the last left off. Episodic seriality combines these narrative strategies. Hence, for example, the crime of the week might be solved and the bad guy captured, but the romance between two recurring characters remains ambiguous, if tantalizingly further suggested, and one more piece of a recurring character's mysterious past seems to have been revealed.

2 This is not to mention related experiences outside the direct control of the television industry, from magazines to websites to social networking to critical and scholarly tomes to "water cooler chat" lubricating social interaction based on shared televisual experiences and/or affinities.

3 See, for example, Mullen 2008. For collections of studies premised on a shared understanding of the implications of multichannel television see Banet-Weiser et al. 2007 and Jancovich & Lyons 2003. For an explanation of the "post-network" era, see Lotz 2007. For work defining convergence culture, see Jenkins 2006. For the most sophisticated and original development of ideas about DiY TV, its sources, and its implications, see Hartley 1999.

4 Most US networks own and operate (O&O) a few of their own television stations, usually in the largest markets, but are limited by regulatory decree to only a specific percentage of the total US population in their potential audience reach through these stations.

5 Hence former NBC executive Paul Klein's description of "least objectionable programming."

6 Traditionally, between 85 and 100 episodes, or nearly four full US television seasons, were necessary before a show could be "stripped" across a weekday syndication schedule. Seemingly paradoxically, this deficit finance system has made for bigger budget shows as "risk" was shared by multiple corporate entities and competition to get (and stay) on air was fierce (thus providing incentive for shows to look good).

7 The FCC (which regulates Television Market Areas) and Nielsen Media Research (which measures Designated Market Areas) recognize 210 geographically distinct television market areas in the US.

8 By 1980, for example, this meant the elimination of certain technical specifications, the "anti-leapfrogging," and the syndicated exclusivity (syndex) provisions that had been restricting cable operators. Syndex was reinstated again in 1989.

9 In an even more recent trend, however, amid even newer DBS and teleco competition abetted by additional deregulatory legislation since 2005 where at least 22 states have shifted multichannel franchising decisions from the municipal to the state level, the percentage of households subscribing to actual cable in 2007, according to the industry's own trade association, had declined to 58 percent (National Cable & Telecommunications Association).

10 Fox, for example, still does not program the final hour (10.00 to 11.00 p.m. EST) of primetime. See, for example, Flint & Wharton 1994. See also Chapter 6 for details on how this treatment encouraged a network-wide practice of "stunting."

11 In 1985 the FCC began enforcing the "Rule of Twelves" which replaced the prior 7–7–7 rule, meaning that a single entity could now own up to 12 AM radio, 12 FM radio, and 12 TV stations nationwide (instead of 7), so long as the 12 stations cumulatively reached no more than 25 percent of the nation's homes. This increase in ownership limits was further accompanied by a repeal in anti-trafficking provisions that had required television stations to be held for a minimum of three years before selling. Television stations now became commodities, bought, sold, and from a local managerial as well as national network point of view, destabilized (Holt 2003; Sadler 2005). A decade later the 1996 Telecommunications Act would eliminate the ownership cap completely and increase the audience reach limits from 25 percent to 35 percent (Holt 2003: 16).

12 G.E. owns an 80 percent interest. As this book goes to press, G.E. has announced the sale of NBC Universal to cable MSO Comcast.

13 In a sign of what appears to be a more recent trend toward deconglomeration, CBS (along with CBS Studios, various radio and billboard divisions, and the CW, still half-owned by Time-Warner) has recently undone its merger, spinning-off from Viacom and its cable holdings (MTV, etc.) and Hollywood studio (Paramount) to become simply the CBS Corporation (an emphatically "old media" company, that technically spun Viacom off from it). Time-Warner

has somewhat similarly announced that it is in the process of divesting itself of its MSO holdings, Time Warner Cable, so as to become strictly a media content company (Arango 2008; Li 2008; Reuters 2008b). It has also announced plans to sell off its AOL division (after its infamous and largely unproductive 2001 merger) (Reuters 2008a).

14 The newly formed WB attempted to offset operational costs by reversing one of the traditional terms of affiliation. In a process dubbed "reverse compensation," affiliate stations were charged for affiliation – incrementally sharing the increased profits (presumably derived from now being part of a national network) – rather than compensated for use of their airwaves and time (as the big networks traditionally offered). Fox had previously experimented with reverse compensation and NBC, as part of a wave of sweeping changes it announced over the course of 2008, has suggested it would pursue reverse-compensation deals with its affiliates as well (Greppi 2008). Additionally, despite being part of the media giant Time Warner, the WB claimed revenue limitations (new network, no owned & operated stations) and negotiated with Hollywood's creative guilds (SAG, WGA, DGA) for "a reduced rate on the minimum standard fees and residual payments that networks are obligated to pay creative talent on shows" (Daniels & Littleton 2007: 85). Such short-term leveraging hardly compensated for the proliferation of challenges to the network model.

15 For legal challenges to time shifting, see Balio 2004.

16 For a detailed example, see Chapter 4.

17 As Elmer and Gasher note, "runaway production" suggests "something lamentable: a flight; a loss; an escape – fugitive film shoots making off with millions of dollars and thousands of jobs that rightly belong to Californians. In Canada, the place to which many of these projects 'run away,' it is usually called 'foreign service production,' the adjective 'foreign' distinguishing these projects from indigenous film and television productions, the adjective 'service' denoting the fact that the Canadian contribution is primarily execution, rather than creation, of the project" (Elmer & Gasher 2005: 2).

Chapter 2 The Hero

1 One relevant example illustrates well the ways in which demographic categories of race continue to influence programming decisions with presumptions about marginal and mainstream appeals and audiences. Recalling the somewhat notorious early programming decisions on the WB and UPN netlets in the mid-1990s to drop well-rated sitcoms featuring African American families, former WB Network President of Entertainment Susanne Daniels (later Lifetime Networks President of Entertainment) simply states that "The concern was that, over the long term, the emphasis on courting African

American and Hispanic viewers would hurt and inherently limit the network's appeal to more mainstream audiences'' (Daniels and Littleton 2007: 107). The alibi offered for such racialized programming is economic necessity: ''It is a cold fact of the television advertising business that programs that attract a largely minority audience command lower advertising rates, from a smaller pool of advertisers, than shows with broader appeal'' (Daniels and Littleton 2007: 107). ''Mainstream'' and ''broader appeal'' here explicitly exclude African American and Hispanic viewers, who ''would hurt'' the network even while responsibility for this exclusion is deflected to the ''cold fact'' of business and the demands of another industry (advertising). For a broader theorization and history of such practices that presume whiteness to be an invisible and universal signifier in Western cultural logic, see, for example, Dyer 1997.

2 George Alfred Henty (1832–1902) (quoted in Taves 1993: 62).

3 Jeffords elaborates by noting that ''the male body – principally the white male body – became increasingly a vehicle of display – of musculature, of beauty, of physical feats, and of a gritty toughness. External spectacle – weaponry, explosions, infernos, crashes, high-speed chases, ostentatious luxuries – offered companion evidence of both the sufficiency and the volatility of this display. That externality itself confirmed that the outer parameters of the male body were to be the focus of audience attention, desire, and politics'' (Jeffords 1993: 245).

4 For an overview and analysis of the critical treatment of genre identities and borders, see for example Altman 1999: especially pp. 13–29.

5 Tellingly, Lynne Joyrich, nearly 20 years ago, argued that ''the focus on TV as 'feminine' masks a deeper cultural concern with masculinity'' manifested in programming that excludes the feminine all together in a form she labels hypermasculinity (Joyrich 1990: 157).

6 Of course this is not really new to the genre, as Aaron Taylor reminds about costumed superheroes, ''Their glistening musculature, their glorious, anguished contortions, their endless posing – these are preening bodybuilders in capes and spandex'' (Taylor 2007: 352). And preening bodybuilders, Taylor reminds, via Sam Fussell, apparently despite (but actually specifically because of) their hyperbolic signification of masculinity stand ''In a reversal of sex roles, with the [bodybuilder and/or hero] taking a traditionally female role: body as object.'' (Fussell 1994).

7 Fan fiction narrating same-sex erotic encounters between two fictional characters not depicted as being involved with each other (and otherwise depicted as heterosexual) in source text is called ''slash'' fiction as a shorthand (e.g. Kirk/Spock, or Clark/Lex).

8 These are just representatively common pairings, hardly the full range of creative coupling imagined by fans of these series in their own fiction and art work. In the case of *Doctor Who* there actually seem to be many more couplings between the Doctor and Jack Harkness, but this hardly seems like trying given Jack's clearly

articulated "omnisexual" appetites and the two characters' shared on-screen flirting and kisses. Because the Doctor can regenerate into different bodies played by different characters and is now on his overall eleventh regeneration, slashing often follows the format of Jack/10 for example.

9 For an easy and immediate example, the pilot episode of *Smallville* featured a sequence in which Clark Kent and Lex Luthor "meet violent" (rather than a romantic comedy's "meet cute") resulting in Clark giving Lex CPR. As this scene plays with the DVD audio commentary on, the producers can be heard suggesting "We love the idea of them kissing" with muffled (perhaps uncomfortable?) laughter. ("Pilot" audio commentary. *Smallville: The Complete First Season*, Warner Bros, DVD, 2003).

10 Similarly for *Smallville*, see, for example, Battis 2006; or for the politics of race and outing in *Smallville*, see Nishimi 2005.

Chapter 3 How to Watch Television

1 Video libraries, makeshift video halls, and intellectual property "piracy" compensate for missed continuity amid rampant power outages and inconsistent service in locations such as Kampala as the growth of direct broadcast satellite services (DBS), such as South Africa-based MultiChoice's DStv, have introduced audiences to the pleasures of episodic-serial television programming. One frequently cited such program has been *Smallville*. See, for example: New Vision (2007a, b).

2 For background see Petro 1986. On the gendering of culture, see Huyssen 1986. For a critical analysis of the historic alliance between technology and masculinity, see Oldenziel 1999; For an overview of the relationship between technology and gender, see for example Lerman et al. 2003.

3 For a different elaboration of this point, see also Hartley 2008.

4 For more about the continued newness of old television, see Collins 1989, 1992. For a concise history of the rerun, see Williams 1994b.

5 See Pollock 2002, quoted more fully in the next chapter.

6 And the scholarly imaginary as well: see, for example, Breckenridge et al. 2002; Calabrese 2002; and Featherstone et al. 2002.

7 See also Appiah 2006 and Harvey 2009.

8 As Herman and McChesney (2003) explain, "Its core element and centerpiece is the idea that the market allocates resources efficiently and provides *the* means of organizing economic (and perhaps all human) life."

Chapter 4 *Highlander*

1 The pre-credit voice-over spoken by actor Adrian Paul as Duncan MacLeod, the Highlander. This wording was from the first season. The wording was

changed for the second and third seasons, and no longer spoken in the first person by MacLeod. It was changed again for the fourth season and the speaker identified himself as a "Watcher." Viewers would recognize this speaker as the character Joe Dawson (actor Jim Byrnes).

2 While derived from the Middle Eastern *The Thousand and One Nights* tales, it is clear that the co-produced series *Sinbad* owes its thoroughly westernized heritage much more directly to what Wen-Chin Ouyang has called "the eighteenth-century psuedo-translations of oriental tales" into European languages and secularized ideologies. For more on the westernization and popular global circulation of the character of Sinbad the Sailor, see Wen-Chin Ouyang (2004).

3 The feature film *Highlander* centered on the character of Connor MacLeod (played by US-born, Swiss-raised, French-speaking actor Christopher Lambert), a Scotsman (from the *Highlands* of Scotland) born in 1518 who, upon being killed in battle, fails to die. He learns, under the tutelage of Ramirez, an ancient Egyptian disguised as a Spaniard (played, rather surprisingly, by Scottish actor Sean Connery), that he is an Immortal. Christopher Lambert reprised his role as Connor MacLeod in the pilot episode of the television series in order to introduce his protégé and our new protagonist, Duncan MacLeod. Duncan MacLeod is 74 years Connor's junior, leading Connor to quip "same clan, different vintage".

4 The rights were owned by the US company Davis/Panzer. To the entertainment industry *Highlander* has become a moderately lucrative property, so far attaching its brand to five live-action feature films, three internationally distributed television series (one an animated children's program), a series of novels and fiction anthologies, and numerous collectors' items. A series of video games began release in 2007, featuring voices and likenesses of actors from the films and television series. The fifth feature film produced, *Highlander: The Source* (Brett Leonard, 2007), featured cast members from the television series, but was released in the US as a made-for-cable tele-film on the SciFi Channel. That same year an animated *anime*-style film *Highlander: The Search for Vengeance* (Yoshiaki Kawajiri, 2007) – released in the US straight to DVD – introduced a new Immortal member of the same Scottish clan, Colin MacLeod (voiced by Alistair Abell). For a while there were even rumors of a Broadway musical optioned by Mel Brooks' attorney Alan "may the Schwartz be with you" Schwartz. In 2008 it was announced that the production company Summit Entertainment had acquired the rights to remake the original 1986 film with a new cast and with *Iron Man* (Jon Favreau 2008) writers Art Marcum and Matt Holloway attached to the project. Such are the examples of the efforts at what *Daily Variety* called "an ongoing re-launch of the fantasy-action franchise." There can be only one, indeed (Bond 2004; Fritz 2004; Harris 2004; Kit 2008; McNary 2008).

5 All this, notes David Abramowitz, with a comparatively limited staff. ''There just wasn't enough time. Most shows, if you look on television, have writing staffs of six, eight writers. I, for the most part, had two writers. Sometimes I had three writers. So, there was just – the amount of time – and sometimes I had to accept things that were just okay. Because when a show shoots, if they don't have a script, it could cost $15- or $20,000 an hour for the show . . . while people are just standing around, waiting for material. And we couldn't afford to shut down for a day. We weren't a very rich show.'' (Abramowitz, personal communication).

6 Quality programming is here a strategy as opposed to aesthetic or moral evaluation. See, for example Feuer 1984; Williams 1994a; and for a perspective from the television industry, Coe 1991. See also Chapter 6.

7 See ''The Making of *Highlander: The Series*'' packaged as ''Behind-The-Scenes Video'' distributed by Artisan Entertainment for Republic Pictures included in the box set ''The Gathering.'' The ''B-T-S Video'' is copyrighted 1997, although it was clearly shot circa 1992.

8 Included, for example, with the home video and DVD collections are a series of behind-the-scenes promotional documentaries collectively entitled ''Under the Kilt'' which go into great detail elaborating the research and preparation establishing authenticity for each episode. Nevertheless, such authenticity does not always play as intended. Katie King, for example, has argued that the historical scenes look much more like amateur ''re-enactments'' with authentic-looking costumes and props than genuine historicism (King 2002).

9 Gracen would later star in her own, albeit short-lived, spin-off entitled *Highlander: The Raven* (1998–9) which ceased production after 22 episodes.

10 Tessa (speaking first) and Duncan from the *Highlander* episode ''For Tomorrow We Die''.

11 Productions considered ''official co-productions'' in Canada, for example, ''are eligible as Canadian content for broadcasters seeking to fulfill their regulatory obligations.'' Thus, official co-productions between France and Canada (as *Highlander* was) ''are eligible for assistance from various public support programs available in Canada, including . . . the Equity Investment Program of the Canadian Television Fund (CTF); the CTF's License Fee Program, and tax credits'' (Canada Telefilm 2002). For a succinct summary of the various types of ventures and the advantages they potentially hold for production partners, see Tinic 2003. For more details on Canadian co-productions see, for example, Hoskins & McFadyen 1993. Canada has since established more than 44 international co-production treaties (Tinic 2003).

12 In recognition of this ambiguity, fans took to calling the location ''Seacouver.'' For an explanation of why Canadian cities are not allowed to play themselves on TV and in Film, see, for example, Gasher 2002.

13 Hoskins and McFadyen's research into French-Canadian co-productions concludes, "the French partners in such projects are using the co-productions to participate in projects which have the promise of US sales (and in some cases, US partner participation) while Canadian partners are using the co-productions to assemble the financing necessary for such ambitious projects" (Hoskins and McFayden 1993).

14 French-Canada would soon come on board with cfcf-tv (the CTV Television Network affiliate in Montreal). Meanwhile, TF1 would end its partnership after the first year, reportedly because of the English language content of the program, allowing the less well-financed French channel M6 to become the French distributor, but forcing greater reliance on the Filmline partnership (see Sherwood cited in King 2002: 105–6).

15 Japan had been reportedly mostly interested in the music rights and musical guest stars. Abramowitz recalls, for example, that the Japanese partners dropped out when it became clear the program would be unable to get Mick Jagger to guest star (Abramowitz, personal communication).

16 Rysher TPE was acquired by media conglomerate and cable MSO Cox Broadcasting in April 1993. In May 1999 control of Rysher was assumed by Viacom's Paramount Studios.

17 As Keith Samples explained at one point, "the deal that we have on it is not the kind of deal that we're ever going to make an inordinate amount of money no matter how successful the show is." Instead, he suggested, Rysher got involved to "'make us a player internationally by starting relationships with key foreign players" (quoted in Mahoney 1992).

18 In fact this arrangement made the series hard to resist even for American broadcasters used to having a much stronger say in the content of co-produced programming. Typically, as Steven Maier has suggested, "When push comes to shove, I think the American broadcasters expect to get their way" (quoted in Mahoney 1992). More than one international producer has noted "Co-productions with Americans invariably suffer from identity problems ... The American determines the script. There are no compromises" (Hoskins and McFadyen 1993).

19 While it is true, on the other hand, that US television producers have looked to foreign syndication as a significant site of profit generation for several decades, such an observation can be misleading. Most programming aired on the US networks is deficit-financed, relying on a successful network run to create secondary-market interest in the program which can then be licensed into syndication where costs are recouped and profit generated. With this reliance on a successful and lengthy US network run, it is not completely accurate to say that international markets figured prominently in the conception and execution of programming. US network concerns instead reigned supreme. Foreign markets, on paper,

look the most profitable only because by the time a program is sent abroad US producers have already made back their initial investment as well as some profit and all overseas sales are sheer profit on each program. However, as noted in Chapter 2, as with most aspects of television, this too is in transition.

20 That is, to the extent that defining identity through the negative can be distinct.

21 This is measured out of 210 markets nationwide as designated by Nielsen Media Research, the ratings measurement monopoly owned by the Dutch conglomerate VNU.

22 "Because of the partnership we had to find a French actress that would be appealing on a television screen. Not appealing physically, but appealing in the sense that you were comfortable with her accent and her character. I also liked Alexandra a lot. She was able to be exotic, pretty and not so unfamiliar to an American audience that she was accepted" (Goodman quoted in Thomas 2002).

23 Demonstrating the extra-textual knowledge deployed to compensate for and to discipline the series' semiotic excess, these extra seven or so minutes of each episode are known to US fans as the Eurominutes.

24 The vaguely chivalrous "Rules" include guidelines for the ritualistic combat between Immortals (leading to the decapitation of one or the other) such as never interfering in the fights of other Immortals and considering all "Holy Ground" a safe zone.

25 Although little elaborated within the series, "The Prize" is presumed, among fans, to be a sort of all-knowing, all-powerful, world leadership. We might think of it as Immortal omnipotence.

26 See, for example, Caldwell 1995; Olson 1999.

27 If the 1970s series had a mystical "Orient" in which to place Caine's childhood, *Highlander* had 400 years of world history to place its flashbacks. For more on *Kung Fu*, see for example Tasker 2001.

28 Indeed one of the favorite supporting characters of the series is Methos, the oldest living Immortal aged at more than 5000 years, with a different world view, different morality, and a history so old he cannot even remember his early days.

29 Suggesting the nature of these appeals, most fan discourse has centered on the romantic notions surrounding the characters' Immortality addressed serially: the "Talmudic discussion" rather than the "ass kicking."

30 Stan Kirsch, who played the character of Richie Ryan. Richie was inadvertently killed by Duncan MacLeod at the end of the fifth season. At least one fan website exists, entitled "Clan Denial" (www.clandenial.org), dedicated to undoing the narrative injustice imposed by The Powers That Be (TPTB).

31 Grayson to MacLeod as they begin their final sword duel in the first-season episode "Band of Brothers."

32 According to the "Official Highlander Web Page" (produced by Davis Panzer Productions and cited in several of the fans' FAQ sites): "While in the writing program at UCLA's Film School, Gregory Widen traveled to Scotland and then England where he visited the Tower of London's world famous armory collection. This visit inspired Widen to imagine life in the Middle Ages and then the life of an Immortal 'born' at the same time." Bill Panzer told a similar story in interviews, suggesting the Immortal came into existence when Widen noted a suit of armor and asked himself, "what if this guy was still alive?" (Hunt 2002).
33 The spirit of this phrasing may have been inspired by Gasché 2006 (see, for example, p. 186).
34 By the end of the shortened season (in the two-part final episodes of the series) Mac is deemed potentially suicidal and heavenly intervention in the form of Roger Daltrey (as deceased friend Hugh Fitzcairn) is called upon, in an explicit riffing of *It's A Wonderful Life*, to show Mac the world had he never been.

Chapter 5 *Smallville*

1 Clark is running for class president in *Smallville* "Drone" season 1, episode 18 initially aired 4/30/2002; in this same episode, Lex comes up with a campaign slogan for Clark, "man of tomorrow," meta-textually referring not only to Clark's adolescence in this program, but also referencing Superman's post-1939 World's Fair denomination.
2 This standard work-for-hire system, that would persist within the industry essentially until the 1980s, was very soon contested by Siegel. Siegel, joined at times by Shuster, almost immediately felt the terms were unfair and in any case were not being met. He would contest the ownership of Superman (in court whenever possible) for the rest of his life (receiving recognition and some recompense at the end of the 1970s after a publicity campaign that threatened to stain the debut of *Superman: The Movie*). His heirs continue legal proceedings against Warner Bros to this day (see Jones 2004; Fingeroth 2007; Wallace 2007; Cieply 2008).
3 For a brief summary of this early history, see Bradford Wright 2001: 4–7; Daniels 1995: 12–23; for detailed exegesis of this complicated process, see Gerard Jones (specific details mentioned here are covered beginning on p. 223).
4 Earlier theatrically released animated shorts featuring Superman (1941) had been produced by Fleischer Studios and distributed through Paramount Studios. Theatrically released motion-picture serials (1948) had been produced and distributed by Columbia Pictures.
5 WB merged with rival UPN in 2006 to become the CW.
6 See, for example, Ault 2002.

7 Gallo 2003: 22; Ault 2002: 29 (cited in Jones 2006). See, for example, "Fever" season 2, episode 16, originally aired February 16, 2003. The "mix" CD was released for purchase the following week, on Tuesday, February 25, 2003.
8 The WB's "signature" shows were those most associated with its marketing brand, i.e. teen dramedies. With the exception of *Gilmore Girls* (2000–7), only *Smallville* was produced by a Time Warner division. For example, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and its spin-off, *Angel*, were produced by 20th Century Fox TV (a corporate sibling of the FOX network), *7th Heaven* and *Charmed* by Viacom (through subsidiary Spelling Television, while other subsidiaries included rival netlet UPN and, starting in 2000, major network CBS), *Dawson's Creek* came from Sony Pictures Entertainment, and *Felicity* from Walt Disney Company's Touchstone Television (Disney also owns the ABC television network). Such a list also reveals the extent to which supposed competitors are actually vested in one another's success.
9 An heroic character featured in multiple stories by Edgar Rice Burroughs.
10 The self-proclaimed "father of physical culture" who promoted bodybuilding, nutrition, and various health theories, MacFadden was also associated with his Macfadden Publishing empire of pulp publications including *True Detective*, *True Romances*, *Dream World*, and for a while, *Photoplay.*
11 A note successfully played in the first season of the NBC program *Heroes* in the guise of the character Hiro (see Conclusion).
12 Exposing unsafe working conditions in a coal mine, razing dilapidated slum housing, encouraging a campaign of massive public aid, saving juvenile delinquents from imprisonment, etc. (all in the first several issues of *Action Comics*).
13 One might add, also for another time, or even simply for another issue or episode.
14 Particularly the early scenes of the Donner film and the characters of the DC universe.
15 Rosenbaum played Lex Luthor in *Smallville* (quoted in Hedegaard 2002: 43).
16 *Smallville* debuted the season after the WB lost 20th-Century-Fox-produced *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* to the UPN in a poorly played bidding war for license renewal. Although it had been conceived of prior to this loss, there remained ample time to adjust promotions (perhaps even writing) in light of these events.
17 This was but one version of the action hero under threat offered anew that same fall season. Fox debuted *24* and ABC debuted *Alias*, both of which, like *Smallville*, had been conceived and had several episodes already filmed prior to the events of September 11, 2001, but immediately took on heightened signification amid the changed political context.
18 An unofficial fan website www.tomwelling.com, recounts that Tom Welling has modeled for Calvin Klein, Tommy Hilfiger and Abercrombie & Fitch

(with layouts shot by photographer Bruce Weber, among others). See: http://www.tomwelling.com/index

19 See, for example, Gilbert 2001 and: http://www.ew.com/ew/article/0,,182509,00.html

20 The idea that Clark Kent and Lex Luthor were once friends before famously becoming great enemies, while most fully and compellingly explored in *Smallville* (assisted by Michael Rosenbaum's astute performance as Lex), did not originate with the television series. See, for example, *Superman* #173, November 1964; and *Superman Birthright* (Waid 2004).

21 *Superman II* (Richard Lester/Richard Donner, 1980).

22 Cain played Superman in the ABC series *Lois & Clark* and in *Smallville* played some type of unidentified and tragically villainous . . . immortal.

23 For example: "Metamorphosis" (season 1, episode 2, originally aired October 23, 2001) and "Rosetta" (season 2, episode 17, originally aired February 25, 2003).

24 For example: "Reckoning" (season 5, episode 12, originally aired January 26, 2006).

25 For example: "Crusade" (season 4, episode 1, originally aired September 22, 2004) where he is "possessed" by his Kryptonian identity, Kal-El.

26 For example: "Hidden" (season 5, episode 3, originally aired October 13, 2005) or "Gemini" (season 7, episode 9, originally aired December 13, 2007).

27 He does nearly don a red cape in "Action" (season 7, episode 5).

28 Clark's virginity was of particular concern, given his super powers' possible effects during climax. In the perhaps telling event, Clark loses his virginity after losing (temporarily, it turns out) his super powers ("Mortal" season 5, episode 2 originally aired October 6, 2005). A different concern, in terms of the Superman brand and property, animated this particularly lengthy deferral, so that the characters had to age into Season 5 before restrictions were lifted by corporate sibling DC. Al Gough puts it this way, "how many shows have to wait five seasons before they can play their key love triangle, which is Clark, Lana, and Lex? We had to wait, quite frankly, until everybody was legal" (quoted in Aurthur 2006: 9).

29 Moreover, knowing that Superman and Lex Luthor famously become arch-enemies lends all the more fun to fan speculation that the show presents them as lovers, if only through coded references.

30 Amanda Lotz notes a similar trend in the women-center programming from this same era that she analyzes. As she observes, "Most of the series function with a dual episodic and serial structure – a specific threat must be vanquished in each episode, but characterization and other narrative elements contribute to the ongoing development of the serial narrative" (Lotz 2006: 72).

31 "Reckoning" is from season 5, episode 13, and originally aired January 26, 2006.

32 Within the complex paradigmatic narrative buildup, this ending is "supposed" to happen if we are familiar with *The Adventures of Superman* and *Superman: The Movie* but not the post-1986 comic books in which both Martha and Jonathan Kent live well into old age. In *It's Superman!: A Novel* (by Tom De Haven) it is Martha Kent who dies young, leaving Jonathan to finish raising his adopted son.

Chapter 6 *24*

1 Definition one is an amalgamation of several dictionary definitions of "stunt." Definition two is a quote from Susan Tyler Eastman and Douglas A. Ferguson (2009: 133).
2 While the pilot episode had already been planned to debut in November, following Fox's coverage of post-season baseball that fall, the events of September 11, 2001 did add an initially unintended timeliness to the program and also led to some last minute changes in the first few episodes. The pilot episode's depiction of a terrorist setting a bomb aboard a crowded 747 and then parachuting out before it exploded, for example, was considerably trimmed so that most of these events were held off screen instead (Weinraub 2001).
3 Cochran and Surnow had previously worked together on the Canadian-USA produced cable spy drama *La Femme Nikita*.
4 This posturing was itself a stunt, not acknowledging that ABC had attempted a somewhat similar stunt six years earlier (*Murder One*, in which a single criminal trial took up one entire season).
5 In terms of rating competition, this was a particularly difficult time slot, with the other networks programming *NYPD Blue* (ABC), *Frasier* and *Scrubs* (NBC), *The Guardian* (CBS), *Smallville* (WB), and *Roswell* (UPN) all during the same time as *24*'s debut.
6 A satire of the family sitcom, *The Simpsons* was programmed at its ratings peak, in another network stunt, against the once unbeatable, but by then flailing family sitcom par excellence, *The Cosby Show* (on NBC's "Must See" Thursday nights).
7 Acquired by Murdoch in 1985 from Metromedia which had been formed in the aftermath of the demise of the previous fourth network, the DuMont network, in 1955.
8 Despite its control-room and computer screen, multi-window look, Tara McPherson reminds us that while watching *24*, "when offered up a screen of four simultaneous storylines, we can hardly choose which story we would like to follow or pursue the story at our own pace, at least at the moment of broadcast. . . . In fact, the real-time conceit of the series serves to heighten its tight linearity, despite its split-screen window dressing, reinstalling a strict temporal progress as the 24 hours rapidly tick by. This clock only moves in

one direction, taking us along as it goes, reducing interactivity to the viewers' previously mentioned desire to shout at the screen as the characters endlessly get embroiled in soap-like plotlines, tragedies, and crises" (2007: 179).

9 So why not just brew a "truth serum," one dares to wonder.

10 Then presidential candidate John McCain attempted to clarify his appreciation of the program when he answered magazine *Marie Claire*'s question in 2008 about which celebrity he would like to be compared to, Bob Dylan or Jack Nicholson, with "Keifer Sutherland. 'It's Jack Bauer.' We have a lot in common because he escapes all the time." The magazine responded to the choice of Bauer by noting that "Um, he's also a torturer" to which the candidate demurred, "Yeah, that's right. That's where Jack and I disagree. He believes in torture, but I don't." McCain himself had previously made a dialogue-less cameo appearance in season/day 5 (although not as himself, but as a nameless Washington functionary) (McKelvey 2008).

11 Yoo is the principal author of the infamous "torture memo" outlining a legal rationale and justification for the US to officially participate in the torture of human beings.

12 Appearing again nearly two years later, Sutherland reiterated to Rose that on *24* torture is "a dramatic device to show you how important a situation is. And how heightened and desperate the situation is" (Sutherland 2008).

13 Zizek refers to this as the series' ideological lie, apparently agreeing with FBI expert Joe Navarro, who told *The New Yorker* "Only a psychopath can torture and be unaffected. You don't want people like that in your organization. They are untrustworthy, and tend to have grotesque other problems" (Meyer 2007; for similar such concerns, see also Green 2005).

14 Quoted in Lithwick (2008).

15 Zizek (2006).

16 Sutherland on *Charlie Rose* (2007).

Chapter 7 *Doctor Who*

1 The fourth Doctor, as played by Tom Baker in the 1975 tele-story "Ark in Space."

2 In the episode "Doomsday," episode 13, series 2, 2006.

3 Meant to fully embrace John Reith's long-standing BBC edict to "inform, educate, and entertain," the program was initially intended as family-friendly educational entertainment appealing especially to young audiences, aged 9 to 14. The earliest characters included this teenaged girl and her high school science and history teachers.

4 Their success also guaranteed that purely historical, educational episodes – originally meant to be at least half the program's content – would dwindle considerably, all but disappearing by 1967 (Bould 2008: 215).

5 This is not including a pre-*Star Wars* Peter Cushing, who played the Doctor in two mid-1960s British feature films shot to capitalize on Dalek-mania and not usually included within the program's chronology.

6 As a radio broadcaster: the BBC began broadcasting television programming in 1936.

7 As played by David Tennant, the tenth Doctor, having just recently regenerated. "The Christmas Invasion" a special episode originally aired between Series 1 and Series 2.

8 Michael Grade had put *Doctor Who* on an 18 month hiatus in 1986 (returning it to air only after a massive fan outcry) when he was controller of BBC1 due to "a personal dislike of the show." The program was then pulled off the air completely in 1989 by then controller Jonathan Powell after suffering in a new weekday timeslot against ITV stalwart *Coronation Street*. Grade is reported in 2005 to have sent BBC director general Mark Thompson a note at the end of the first series describing the new program as a "classy, popular triumph" (Deans 2005).

9 BBC Online was later renamed BBCi and then simply bbc.co.uk. *Doctor Who* was an important property for testing new uses for this developing BBC outlet, particularly in its internationally-focused (and, alas, short lived) "cult" television section.

10 BBC2's 1999 *"Doctor Who* Night," for example spoofed the old series as did BBC1's *Comic Relief* special "The Curse of the Fatal Death" (written by Steven Moffat).

11 With all due respect to Mr. Smith, "John Smith" has been used by the Doctor in both the new program and the original program on frequent occasion as a half-hearted and typically less-than-convincing alias, since long before this particular John Smith arrived at the BBC. In fact, while "John Smith" was first used as an alias by the Doctor in the 1968 story "The Wheel in Space" with Patrick Troughton playing the (second) Doctor, the BBC website helpfully notes that the very first episode, "An Unearthly Child" is also the first to mention the name "John Smith," wherein the "popular beat combo John Smith and the Common Men could be heard playing on the radio" (see: www.bbc.co.uk/doctorwho/episodes/2007/facts/fact_301.shtml). In the new program, the Doctor has used the name several times, including the third series episode that introduces new companion Martha Jones (Freema Agyeman), "Smith and Jones" and later that same series, for an extended period across the two-part episodes "Human Nature" and "The Family of Blood." In the "Human Nature" episode he also mentions that his parents were Sydney ("a watchmaker") and Verity ("a nurse"), obvious if obscure references to Sydney Newman, the Canadian-born, at the time recently-appointed (from ITV) Head of Drama at the BBC, responsible, among other things, for initially putting the original *Doctor Who* on the air and

Verity Lambert, the original producer of *Doctor Who* from its inception until 1965 (and who, at the time, was the only female drama producer at the BBC).

12 By 2007 it was possible to announce that BBC Worldwide's record profits of the previous year (an increase of 24 percent) were "thanks to Doctor Who" whose second series was the BBC's "top-selling TV programme." In light of this, Smith proposed that "We are now investing to build our digital offering and strengthen our position in markets such as the US, China, India and Australia, creating one of the world's premier content networks" (*Birmingham Post* 2007: 2) By the start of the fourth series in Spring of 2008, *Doctor Who* was declared a £100 million brand.

13 Later series of the program would air even earlier on Saturday evenings.

14 Moffat, writer of some of the most celebrated episodes, is – at the time of this writing – scheduled to take over for Davies as head writer/executive producer (i.e. "showrunner") in 2010.

15 UK popular and scholarly discourse tends to use "series" the way the word "season" is used in the US to indicate the periodic (usually annual) release of a group of new episodes. I have adopted the term for this chapter.

16 Unlike the bobby, however, the police box clearly signified *Doctor Who*. Tellingly, shortly before the new series was launched, its British iconicity was confirmed by the British government in an intellectual property case: the BBC succeeded in a six-year battle with the Metropolitan Police over the image rights to the TARDIS, always appearing as a police call box. Strikingly, "the Patent Office ruled that the Metropolitan Police could not claim ownership over the image of the police call box as it was now '*more associated with the TV series' than with the police*" (italics added, Sherwin 2002). In 1993 BBC One aired a short informational documentary ("Bigger Inside Than Out" 1993, BBC) explaining the history and function of actual police call boxes as part of its observation of *Doctor Who*'s thirtieth anniversary. The time and space machine, it was felt, needed less explanation to 1990s audiences than the box it was disguised to look like.

17 The practice of contracting with independent and commercial producers has increased dramatically, however, especially since the 1990 Broadcasting Act. For example, unlike previous producers of *Doctor Who*, Russell T. Davies was not a civil servant employee of the BBC but "an independent contractor hired specifically for the project" (Phelan 2005: 6).

18 Douglas Adams, as *Doctor Who* fans are aware, was briefly the original program's script editor, penning a few episodes himself (including the debated/celebrated 1979 "City of Death" (see, for example, McKee 2007) under a shared pseudonym) and has had his work referenced throughout the new program: David Tennant's first outing as the Doctor finds him defeating aliens while wearing a bathrobe and declaring "how very Arthur Dent"; another episode is entitled "42"; the fourth series includes the discovery

that bees have left the Earth to go back to their home planet in advance of imminent catastrophe on Earth (much like the Dolphins in *HHGTTG*).

19 The *Sunday Times*, while noting this tradition, nonetheless, remained initially unimpressed, rather ungraciously suggesting another interpretation of the series' uniquely British character, insisting that "the authentic nostalgia lay in the crap special effects and hokey crowd scenes, where 10 had to make do for 1,000. The dialogue was mostly exclamatory, interspersed with unbelievable explanations of bits of plot and lots of running" (Gill 2005: 12). Other early reviews – while positive – wondered how long the program could go on "script recycling all the things fans know and love but with a modern sensibility," particularly since "some of the effects were still ropey" (quoted in Pratt 2005: 11; see also Ramchandani 2005: 11).

20 Christie, The Doctor later claims, becomes the best selling author ever in the history of the universe and is still in print (physical, paper and ink, no less) a billion years (!) in the future.

21 Having befriended Harriet Jones (Penelope Wilton), during her rise to power and witnessed her pointed refusal to play poodle to the US president, the Doctor cannot abide her decision to have a retreating alien spacecraft destroyed and so sinks her administration with a scandal initiated by just six words whispered to her assistant ("don't you think she looks tired?").

22 As the website notes: "Its mission is to create, acquire, develop and exploit media content and brands around the world in order to maximize the value of the BBC's assets for the benefit of the UK license payer." See: http://www.bbcworldwide.com/about-bbc-worldwide.aspx

23 Itself occasionally re-played on the cable outlet BBC America.

24 During the earliest seasons, each individual episode was given its own title, even it if was part of a larger story.

25 In the event, *Doctor Who* has included *Buffy* actor Anthony Head while spinoff (and anagram) *Torchwood* has included James Marsters (who also had a recurring role in *Smallville* as Brainiac) as guest villains. Anthony Head, who prior to *Buffy* had been famous for his romantic Gold Blend coffee advertisements, had been an early favorite in British press speculation to actually play the latest incarnation of the Doctor upon the show's return (Jagasia 2002; Leonard 2002).

26 The program's closing credits always include "With thanks to Canadian Broadcasting Corporation."

27 A strategy that seems to have benefited Wales – as was presumably intended – with Welsh newspapers reporting it as a boon to Wales' tourist industry, while *Doctor Who* and its spinoffs have been hailed as "Wales' biggest export" which means, for Welsh observers, that "Welsh drama doesn't have to be about heartbreak in the valleys or historic battles against the English"

(quoted from Jones 2008: 4; see also Rowland 2005; Copping 2006; *Wales on Sunday* 2008).

28 Location shooting around South Wales has been extensive (particularly compared to the largely studio-bound original production), with Wales playing itself on occasion, but also standing in for London, Scotland, Norway, and multiple alien planets. The use of Wales in this way has not gone unremarked, with some wags wondering, if you could travel anywhere through time and space, why anyone would visit Cardiff more than once. *Torchwood* makes much more explicit use of its Cardiff location, but also uses that location as something of a running joke throughout its series.

29 13 episodes for £13 million ($24.4 million), according to (Clarke 2005b: 4). "BBC1 spent £1 m on each 45-minute episode, although the total cost was £1.2m (the rest came from overseas sales)" (Dyke 2005: 14).

30 *Queer as Folk* (1999–2000) featured a character who was a *Doctor Who* fan, on occasion quizzing his potential lovers about the actors who had played the Doctor.

31 Speaking to the US industry trade journal *Variety* (Clarke 2005a: 20).

32 Quoted in Sherwin 2004: 3.

33 In the episode "New Earth".

34 A line of dialogue immortalized with its own Facebook group shortly after airing.

35 The novels published by Virgin during the program's 16 year hiatus had paved the way for a more sexualized Doctor. These include novels written by Mark Gatiss as well as Davies.

36 Perhaps not unrelatedly, she is also the only one of the Doctor's companions thus far in the new program to hail from other than a working class situation. While Martha is introduced as an interning medical student, Rose is a shop girl and Donna is a hapless office temp.

37 Tulloch and Alvarado's extended analysis of the program has not passed unnoticed by fans or producers of the program. Of particular fascination has been this early application of semiotic analysis's heavy use of academic jargon. Shortly before cancellation, in the 1987 episode "Dragonfire," the Doctor (Sylvester McCoy) distracts a guard with intellectual pretensions by asking "What do you think of the assertion that the semiotic thickness of a performed text varies according to the redundancy of auxillary performance codes?" This line was taken from Tulloch and Alvarado's book. Chapman reports that story editor Andrew Cartmel claims to have "lifted [the] passage about semiotics from a very pretentious text book about *Doctor Who* I happened to have on my shelves" (Chapman 2006: 170). Wikipedia's version of the story, meanwhile, suggests that Cartmel "had suggested that writers read *The Unfolding Text* to familiarise themselves with *Doctor Who* and its history, which inspired Ian Briggs to quote the academic text in his script,

in a playful self-reference'' (2008). In Tulloch and Alvarado's book, the actual sentence, in reference to the meaning of stylistic and formal aspects of a televisual text, reads: ''What Elam calls the semiotic 'thickness' (multiple codes) of a performed text varies according to the 'redundancy' (high predictability) of 'auxiliary' performance codes'' (Tulloch & Alvarado 1983: 249).

Conclusion

1 quoted in Carter 2006.
2 Sale was also employed for a *Heroes* promotional comic book, distributed prior to the show's initial airing (Lisotta 2006).
3 This character, Hana Gitelman, was played by actress Stana Kativa, in brief appearances made on the show. Mostly this character has appeared in stories in NBC.com webcomics (which have been themselves later released in hardcopy forms).
4 He was then the president and creative director of the NBC Agency, later President, NBC program planning, scheduling and strategy.
5 Comparing Nissan's deal with the character Hiro Nakamura's superpower to control the space-time continuum, trade journal *Adweek* gushed ''And in a magical bit of synergy, so does Nissan's sponsorship of the show, by paying for limited commercial interruptions during the first part of the one-hour season premiere'' (Lippert 2007).
6 Hybrid because it promotes, in this case, both Sprint and *Heroes*. Moreover, the initial 15 seconds has traditionally been reserved for Network promotions before the ad break proper begins.
7 Head of NBC Universal's international networks and digital businesses.
8 President of NBC Universal International.

REFERENCES

Abbas, A. (2002) Cosmopolitan De-scriptions: Shanghai and Hong Kong. In Breckenridge, C.A., Pollock, S., Bhabha, H.K. (eds.) *Cosmopolitanism*. Duke University Press, Durham, NC, pp. 32–68, 209–28.

Acland, C. (2007) Introduction: Residual Media. In Acland, C. (ed.) *Residual Media*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, pp. xiii–xxvii.

Action Comics #1 (1997) Reprinted in *Superman: The Action Comics Archives*, vol. 1, DC Comics, New York.

Adalian, J. (1999) When hip hits a blip. *Variety*, October 25–31, p. 1.

Adalian, J. (2001) First look: "24". *Daily Variety*, September 14, p. A16.

Adalian, J. (2002) TV traumas trouble the town. *Variety*, June 24–30, p. 1.

Adalian, J. (2007) Peacock's promo push goes viral. *Variety*, March 19–25, p. 15.

Allen, R. (1985) *Speaking of Soap Operas*. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

Allen, R. (ed.) (1995) *To Be Continued ... Soap Operas Around the World*. Routledge, New York.

Allen, R. (2004) Frequently asked questions: A general introduction to the reader. In Allen, R. and Hill, A. (eds.) *The Television Studies Reader*. Routledge, New York, pp. 1–26.

Altman, R. (1999) *Film/Genre*. BFI, London.

Alvarado, M. (1996) Selling television. In Moran, A. (ed.) *Film Policy: International, National and Regional Perspectives*. Routledge, London, pp. 62–71.

Alvarado, M. (2004) Public service television: Challenge, adaptation and survival. In Sinclair, J. & Turner, G. (eds.) *Contemporary Television*. British Film Institute London, pp. 7–10.

Amdur, N. (2006) The twist for "24" may be in its ratings. *The New York Times*, January 14, retrieved from: www.nytimes.com

Andrae, T. (1980) From menace to messiah: The prehistory of the superman in science fiction literature. *Discourse* 2, Summer, pp. 84–112.

Andrejevic, M. (2003) *Reality TV: The Work of Being Watched*. Rowman & Littlefield, Lahnam, MD.

Appiah, K. A. (2006) *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. W.W. Norton, New York.

Appleyard, B. (2005) Report. *Sunday Times Culture*, March 6, pp. 6–7.

Arango, T. (2008) Holy cash cow, batman! Content is back. *The New York Times*, August 10, pp. 1, 8.

Atkinson, C. (2005) Media morph: BitTorrent. *Advertising Age*, October 17, p. 46.

Ault, S. (2002) Soundtracks a strong promotion for the WB network. *Billboard*, 114:51, December 21, p. 29.

Aurthur, K. (2006) Young male viewers boost "Smallville". *New York Times*, May 20, p. B9.

Balio, T. (2004) Betamax case: U.S. legal decision. In Newcomb, H. (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Television* 2nd ed., vol. 1. Fitzroy Dearborn, New York, pp. 253–4.

Banet-Weiser, S., Chris, C. & Freitas, A. (eds.) 2007) *Cable Vision: Television beyond Broadcasting*. NYU Press, New York.

Banks, M. J. (2004) A boy for all planets: *Roswell*, *Smallville* and the teen male melodrama. In Davis, G. & Dickinson, K. (eds.) *Teen TV: Genre, Consumption and Identity*. British Film Institute, London, pp. 17–28.

Barsanti, C. (2006) Network sadism: Is Fox's *24* an advertisement for torture? *Popmatters.com* March 6, retrieved from: www.popmatters.com/tv/features/060306-24.shtml

Battis, J. (2006) The Kryptonite Closet: Silence and Queer Secrecy in *Smallville*. *Jump Cut* 48, Winter, retrieved from: www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc48.2006/gaySmallville/text.html

Bean, J. M. (2004) "Trauma Thrills": Notes on Early Action Cinema. In Tasker, Y. (ed.) *Action and Adventure Cinema*. Routledge, London, pp. 17–30.

Benhabib, S. (2006) *Another Cosmopolitanism*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Bianco, R. (2001a) In "24," time is truly of the essence. *USA Today*, July 17, p. 4D.

Bianco, R. (2001b) Superboy takeoff has a good chance of flying high. *USA Today*, October 16, p. 4D.

Billen, A. (2008) Doctor's orders. *The Times* (London), June 30, pp. 2, 21.

Birmingham Post. (2007) BBC profit thanks to Doctor. June 29, p. 7.

Blumenthal, H. J. & Goodenough, O. R. (2006) *This Business of Television: The Standard Guide to the Television Industry* 3rd ed., Billboard Books, New York.

Boddy, W. (2004) *New Media and Popular Imagination: Launching Radio, Television, and Digital Media in the United States*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Bond, P. (2004) Stage direction. *The Hollywood Reporter*, September 7.

Bordo, S. (1999) *The Male Body: A New Look at Men in Public and Private*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York.

Bould, M. (2008) Science fiction television in the United Kingdom. In Telotte, J.P. (ed.) *The Essential Science Fiction Television Reader*. University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, pp. 209–30.

Brand Republic. (2008) Doctor Who helps BBC thrash ITV in ratings. April 8, p. 1.

Breckenridge, C. A., Pollock, S., & Bhabha, H. K. (eds.) *Cosmopolitanism*. Duke University Press, Durham, NC.

Brennan, S. (1992) Euro players eye "Highlander": Success of new first-run series may point way for future partnerships. *The Hollywood Reporter*, April 23, p. 10.

Brioux, B. (2001) The teen of steel: Tom Welling is adolescent superman in new series Smallville. *The Toronto Sun*, Wednesday, July 18, p. 70.

Broe, D. (2003) Class, crime, and film noir: Labor, the fugitive outsider, and the anti-authoritarian tradition. *Social Justice*, 30:1, pp. 22–41.

Broe, D. (2004) Fox and its friends: Global commodification and the new cold war. *Cinema Journal*, 43:4, Summer, pp. 97–102.

Brooker, W. (2001) Living on Dawson's Creek: Teen viewers, cultural convergence, and television overflow. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 4:4, pp. 456–72.

Brovsky, C. (1996) Heads up for "Highlander" fan: Aurora resident produces newsletters for popular television series. *The Denver Post*, November 30, p. B-01.

Brunsdon, C. & Gray, A. (eds.) (2008) "Television resurrections": Television and memory. In Focus: The place of television studies: A view from the British Midlands. Special section of *Cinema Journal*, 47:3, Spring, pp. 137–44.

Bukatman, S. (2003) *Matters of Gravity: Special Effects and Supermen in the 20th Century*. Duke University Press, Durham, NC.

Butler, J. (1990) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge, New York.

Byrne, C. (2005) Dr Who saves the earth (and joins the protests against the War in Iraq). *The Independent* (London), December 13, p. 13.

Calabrese, A. (2002) The discrete charm of the world citizen. Presented at the Society for Cinema Studies National Conference, Denver, CO, May 23–6.

Caldwell, J. T. (1995) *Televisuality: Style, Crisis, and Authority in American Television*. Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, NJ.

Caldwell, J. T. (2004) Convergence television: Aggregating form and repurposing content in the culture of conglomeration. In Spigel, L & Olsson, J. (eds.) *Television After TV: Essays on a Medium in Transition*. Duke University Press, Durham, NC, pp. 41–74.

Canada Telefilm. Telefilm Canada, retrieved in 2002 from: www.telefilm.gc.ca/en/intro.htm

Canberra Times. (1998) The good Doctor lives ON: TV on the Internet. August 17, p. 4.

Carr, C. (2002) The enemies on "24": Terrorists and inconsistency. *The New York Times* October 27, p. B25.

Carter, B. (2001) Early buzz gives fox a new hit with an hour-by-hour thriller. *The New York Times*, June 25, p. C9.

Carter, B. (2006) It doesn't take a "comic book nerd" to create a superheroes hit. *New York Times*, October 30, Section E, p. 1.

Chad, N. (2008) Tossing aside "great" expectations. *The Washington Post*, May 19, E02.

Chamberlain, D. & Ruston, S. (2007) *24* and twenty-first century quality television. In Peackock, S. (ed.) *Reading 24: TV Against the Clock*. I.B. Tauris, London, pp. 13–24.

Chapman, J. (2006) *Inside the TARDIS: The Worlds of Doctor Who*. I.B. Tauris, London.

Charles, A. (2007) The ideology of anachronism: Television, history and the nature of time. In Butler, D. (ed.) *Time and Relative Dissertations in Space: Critical Perspectives on Doctor Who*. Manchester University Press, Manchester, UK, pp. 108–22.

Cieply, M. (2008) Ruling gives heirs a share of superman copyright. *The New York Times*, March 29, retrieved in 2008 from: www.nytimes.com/2008/03/29/business/media/29comics.html#

Clarke, S. (2005a) "Who" dunnit once. . . . *Variety*, March 21–*7*, 20).

Clarke, S. (2005b) Leading man through with BBC "Who". *Daily Variety*, March 31, p. 4.

Clarke, S. (2008a) BBC WorldWide reports record profits, *Variety.com*, July 8, retrieved from: www.variety.com/article/VR1117988597.html?categoryid=19&cs=1

Clarke, S. (2008b) Brits give thumbs down to BBC fee. *Variety*, August 18, retrieved from: www.variety.com/article/VR1117990705.html? categoryid=14&cs=1&query=Brits + give + thumbs + down + to + BBC + fee

Clarke, S. (2008c) BBC says Ofcom proposals illegal. *Variety*, October 15, retrieved from: www.variety.com/article/VR1117994035.html?categoryid=14&cs=1&query=BBC + says + Ofcom + proposals + illegal

Coe, S. (1991) Quality TV: Hollywood's elusive illusions. *Broadcasting*, November 18, p. 3.

Collins, J. (1989) Watching ourselves watch television, or who's your agent? *Cultural Studies*, 3, 3, pp. 261–81.

Collins, J. (1992) Postmodernism and television. In Allen, R.C. (ed.) *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled*. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC, pp. 327–53.

Cook, D. A. (2000) *Lost Illusions: American Cinema in the Shadow of Watergate and Vietnam 1970–1979*. University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, p. 307.

Cooke, R. (2005) What's up Doc?. *The Observer*, March 6, Review p. 1.

Coogan, P. (2006) *Superhero: The secret origin of a genre*. Monkey Brain Books, Austin, TX.

Copping, J. (2006) Doctor Who's latest service to mankind ... saving Wales's tourist industry. *The Sunday Telegraph*, April 16, p. 9.

Cornea, C. (2009) Showrunning the *Doctor Who* franchise: A response to Denise Mann. In Mayer, V., Banks, M. and Caldwell, J.T. (eds) *Production Studies: Cultural Studies of Media Industries*, Routledge, New York, pp. 115–22.

Cull, N. (2001) 'Bigger on the inside...' *Doctor Who* as British cultural history. In Roberts, G. & Taylor, P.M. (eds.) *The Historian, Television, and Television History*. University of Luton Press, Luton, UK, pp. 95–112.

Curtin, M. (2004) Media capitals: Cultural geographies of global TV. In Spigel, L. & Olsson, J. (eds.) *Television After TV: Essays on a Medium in Transition*. Duke University Press, Durham, NC, pp. 270–302.

Daily Telegraph, *The* (London) (2002) Obituary of John Nathan-Turner *Doctor Who's* ninth producer who introduced a new look to the show. May 7, p. 21.

Daily Variety. (2002) The nominees: In their own words. February 15, p. A4.

D'Alessandro, A. & Edelson, D. (2000) Fox timeline. *Variety*, March 27–April 2, p. 59.

Daniels, L. (1995) *DC Comics: Sixty Years of the World's Favorite Comic Book Heroes*. Bulfinch Press, New York.

Daniels, S. & Littleton, C. (2007) *Season Finale: The Unexpected Rise & Fall of the WB and UPN*. Harper, New York.

Deans, J. (2005) Doctor Who's greatest enemy finally surrenders. *The Guardian*, June 22, p. 6.

Debruge, P. (2007) No box can hold them. *Daily Variety*, June 14, p. A1.

Delany, S. R. (1980) Generic protocols: Science fiction and the mundane. In de Lauretis, T., Huyseen, A. & Woodward, K. (eds.) *The Technological Imagination: Theories and Fictions*. Coda Press, Madison, WI, pp. 175–93.

Dempsey, J. (2001a) Fox sets '24' rerun on FX. *Daily Variety*, July 30, p. 6.

Dempsey, J. (2001b) AT&T merger prospects nettle News Corp head. *Daily Variety*, November 14, p. 1.

Dempsey, J. (2002) Digital cable's enabled. *Daily Variety*, January 8, p. 20.

Dempsey, J. (2003) Cablers turn tables. *Variety*, December 15–21.

Denison, R. (2007) It's a bird! It's a plane! No, it's DVD! *Superman*, *Smallville*, and the production (of) melodrama. In Gordon, I., Jancovich, M., McAllister, M.P. (eds.) *Film and Comic Books*. University Press of Mississippi, Jackson, MS, pp. 170–9.

Denning, M. (2003) Licensed to look: James Bond and the heroism of consumption. In Lindner, C. (ed.) *The James Bond Phenomenon: A Critical Reader*. Manchester University Press, Manchester, pp. 56–75.

Dominiak, M. (2007) You can read it in the funny pages: Superheroes are flexing their muscles in a variety of media. *Television Week*, June 25, p. 12.

Duin, J. (1999) Despite poor ratings, Fox sticks to racy fare. *The Washington Times*, October 28, p. A11.

Dyer, R. (1997) *White*. Routledge, New York.
Dyke, G. (2005) Doctor Who's greatest triumph: The return of TV for all the family. *The Independent*, June 20, p. 14.
Eastman, S. T. & Ferguson, D. A. (2009). *Media Programming: Strategies & Practices*. 8th ed. Thomson Wadsworth, Boston, MA.
Eco, U. (1972) The myth of superman. *Diacritics*, 2:1, Spring, pp. 14–22.
Eco, U. (1985) Innovation and repetition: Between modern and post-modern aesthetics. *Daedalus*, Fall, pp. 161–84.
Economist, *The* (2006) The End of Olde Englande: A Lament for Blighty. September 14.
Edge, S. (2005) New Doctor Who tickles funny bone. *The Express*, March 9, p. 16.
Ellis, J. (1982) *Visible Fictions: Cinema, Television, Video*. Methuen, London.
Elmer, G. & Gasher, M. (2005) Introduction: Catching up to runaway productions. In Elmer, G. & Gasher, M. (eds.) *Contracting Out Hollywood: Runaway Productions and Foreign Location Shooting*. Rowan & Littlefield, Inc., Lanham, MD, pp. 1–20.
Elsaesser, T. (1973) Tales of sound and fury: Observations on the family melodrama. *Monogram*, 4, pp. 2–15.
Farhi, P. (2006) Calling on Hollywood's terrorism ''experts'': Homeland security chief compares reality and ''24''. *The Washington Post*, June 24, p. C01.
Featherstone, M., Patomäki, H., Tomlinson, J. and Veen, C (eds.) (2002) Cosmopolis. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 19:1–2, February–April.
Feuer, J. (1984) The MTM style. In Feuer, J., Kerr, P. & Vahimagi, T. (eds.) *MTM: Quality Television*. British Film Institute, London.
Fingeroth, D. (2007) *Disguised as Clark Kent: Jews, Comics, and the Creation of the Superhero*. Continuum, New York.
Fisher, K. (2006) NBC Universal chief calls for 'net-savvy TV pitches. *Ars Tehnica* March 13, retrieved from: http://arstechnica.com/news.ars/post/20060313-6369.html
Fiske, J. (1983) ''Doctor Who'': Ideology and the reading of a popular narrative text. *Australian Journal of Screen Theory*, 14–15, pp. 69–100.
Flint, J. & Wharton, D. (1994) Rupert regales regulators. *Variety*, May 2–8, p. 1.
Friedman, W. & Goetzl, D. (2002) Fox hunts for ratings – and senior marketing executive: Network looks for answers to prime-time slide. *Advertising Age*, March 18, p. 3.
Friend, T. (2001) You can't say that. *The New Yorker*, November 11, p. 44.
Fritz, B. (2004) ''Highlander'' makes the Hollywood rounds. *Daily Variety*, September 28, p. 4.
Fritz, B. (2006) Pirate's recent plunder. *Variety*, July 17–23, p. 5.
Fussell, S. (1994) Bodybuilder Americanus. In Goldstein, L (ed.) *The Male Body: Features, Destinies, Exposures*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, pp. 43–60.

Gaines, J. (1991) *Contested Culture: The Image, The Voice, and The Law*. Chapel Hill, NC.

Gallagher, M. (2006) *Action Figures: Men, Action Films, and Contemporary Adventure Narratives*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Gallo, P. (2003) AOL big on 'small' CD. *Daily Variety*, January 22.

Gasché, R. (2006) *The Honor of Thinking: Critique, Theory, Philosophy*. Stanford, Stanford University Press.

Gasher, M. (2002) *Hollywood North: The Feature Film Industry in British Columbia*. University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver.

Genzlinger, N. (2001) Television review: Hormones bothering him as much as kryptonite. *The New York Times*, October 16, p. E7.

Ghandour, R. (2006) We lead the world in television piracy. *The West Australian*, February 25, p. 50.

Gibbs, C. (2007) NBC, MobiTV to compete with Apple in on-demand TV. *RCR Wireless News*, March 19, p. 3.

Gibson, W. (1984) *Neuromancer*. Ace Books, New York.

Gilbert, M. (2001) Teenage wasteland. *The Boston Globe*, November 25, p. L1.

Gill, A. A. (2005) Oh Lord, he's still stuck in the past. *Sunday Times* (London), March 27, p. 12.

Ginsburg, M. (1993) Lessons to learn from the Highlander co-production. *Electronic Media*, January, p. 130.

Gordon, I. (2003) Superman on the set: The market, nostalgia and television audiences. In Jancovich, M. & Lyons, J. (eds.) *Quality Popular Television*, British Film Institute, London, pp. 148–62.

Govil, N. (2002) The metropolis and mental strife: The city in science fiction cinema. In Vasudevan, R., Sundaram, R. & Bagchi, J. et al. (eds.) *Sarai Reader 2002: The Cities of Everyday Life*, Autonomedia, New York, pp. 78–84.

Grade, M. (2006) Fear and the future. Presented at the National Association of Television Program Executives Conference, Las Vegas, January 25, retrieved from: www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/speeches/stories/grade_natpe.shtml

Graser, M. (2001) Cyber biz. *Daily Variety*, September 11, 2001.

Graser, M. (2002) Driven heroes. *Variety*, November 4–10, p. 7.

Graser, M. (2007a) Nissan driving 'Heroes'. *Daily Variety*, June 14, p. 7.

Graser, M. (2007b) NBC U in Virgin Territory. *Daily Variety*, July 13, p. 2.

Green, A. (2005) Normalizing Torture on "24". *The New York Times*, May 22, retrieved from: www.nytimes.com

Greppi, M. (2008) NBC affiliates prepare to swallow bitter reverse-compensation pill. *TV Week*, July 13, retrieved from: www.tvweek.com/news/2008/07/nbc_affiliates_prepare_to_swal.php

Guider, E. (1993) Rysher to handle *Highlander* distrib'n. *Daily Variety*, August 12, p. 22.

Halberstam, J. (1998) *Female Masculinity*. Duke University Press, Durham.

Halliday, J. (2007) Steve Kerho: Director-interactive marketing and media. Nissan North America, *Advertising Age*, September 17, p. S–4.
Harris, D. (2004) "Highlander" toon set. *Variety*, September 6–12, p. 14.
Hartley, J. (1992) *Tele-ology: Studies in Television*. Routledge, New York.
Hartley, J. (1999) *Uses of Television*. Routledge, New York.
Hartley, J. (2008) *Television Truths*. Blackwell Publishing, Malden, MA.
Harvey, D. (2009) *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom*. Columbia University Press, New York.
Hasan, F. (2008, unpublished) Dus Ka Dum. Department of Communication, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
Hedegaard, E. (2002) Tall tales from Smallville. *Rolling Stone*, 892 March 28, p. 43.
Herman, E. S. & McChesney, R. (2003) The rise of the global media. In Parks, L. & Kumar, S. (eds.) *Planet TV: A Global Television Reader*. NYU Press, New York, pp. 21–39.
Hibbard, J. (2003) The WB's Supergirl focuses on branding. *Television Week*, August 4, p. 19.
Hill, J. (2002) British cinema as national cinema: Production, audience, and representation. In Turner, G. (ed.) *The Film Cultures Reader*. Routledge, London, pp. 165–73.
Hinson, H. (2002) Getting to the Heart of a Hero. *The New York Times*, January 27, retrieved from: www.nytimes.com/2002/01/27/arts/television-radio-getting-to-the-heart-of-a-hero.html?pagewanted=all
Holt, J. (2003) Vertical vision: Deregulation, industrial economy and prime-time design. In Jancovich, M. & Lyons, J. (eds.) *Quality Popular Television*. British Film Institute, London, pp. 11–31.
Hoskins, C. & McFadyen, S. (1993) Canadian participation in international co-productions and co-ventures in television programming. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 18, 2, pp. 219–36.
Huff, R. (2001) Rough time for "24" start no. 4 in Tuesday slot. *New York Daily News*, November 8, p. 121.
Hunt, B. (2001) A conversation with Bill Panzer, December 13. The Digital Bits, retrieved on April 9 2002 from: www.thedigitalbits.com/articles/interviews/highlandertv/panzerinterview.html
Huyssen, A. (1986) *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism*. University of Indiana Press, Bloomington, pp. 44–64.
Inness, S. S. (1999) *Tough Girls: Women Warriors and Wonder Women in Popular Culture*. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.
Jagasia, M. (2002) TV favourite to step back into limelight: Return of Dr. Who. *The Express*, July 2, p. 15.
Jancovich, M. & Lyons, J. (eds.) (2003) *Quality Popular Television*. British Film Institute, London.

Jeffords, S. (1993) Can Masculinity Be Terminated? In Cohan, S. & Hark, I.R. (eds) *Screening the Male: Exploring Masculinities in Hollywood Cinema*. Routledge, New York, pp. 245–62.

Jenkins, H. (2006) *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York University Press, New York.

Jensen, J. (2007) Magic bus. *Entertainment Weekly*, September 28, pp. 46–51.

Johnson, P. (2001) CNN, Blitzer up-front on bin Laden questions. *USA Today*, October 18, p. LIFE 6D.

Johnson, R. (2007) Master of the universe. *The Sunday Telegraph* (London), March 11, p. 8.

Jones, C. (2008) Who I Love ya Boyo! *The Western Mail*, April 5, p. 4.

Jones, C. M. (2006) Twenty-first century Superman: *Smallville* and new media mythmaking. *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media* 48 Winter, retrieved from: www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc48.2006/SmallvilleFans/text.html

Jones, G. (2004) *Men of Tomorrow: Geeks, Gangsters and the Birth of the Comic Book*. Basic Books, New York.

Joyrich, L. (1988) All That Television Allows: TV Melodrama, Postmodernism, and Consumer Culture. *Camera Obscura*, 16, pp. 128–53.

Joyrich, L. (1990) Critical and Textual Hypermasculinity. In Mellencamp, P. (ed) *Logics of Television*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, pp. 156–72.

Kackman, M. (2008) Quality television, melodrama, and cultural complexity. *FlowTV*, October 31, retrieved from: http://flowtv.org/?p=2101

Katz, R. (1998) Basic beats b'cast: For first time, cable out-rates big four nets. *Daily Variety*, July 2, 1998.

Kaufman, D. (2007) Campaign of Distinction. *Television Week*, June 11, Special Report Section: Promax/BDA, p. 28.

Kaye, J. & Marich, R. (1996) Foreign TV can break into the US. *The Hollywood Reporter*, January 24.

King, K. (2002) Globalizations, TV technologies, and the re-production of sexual identities: Teaching *Highlander* and *Xena* in layers of locals and globals. In Lay, M.M., Monk, J. & Rosenfelt, D.S. (eds.) *Encompassing Gender: Integrating International Studies and Women's Studies*. The Feminist Press at CUNY, New York, pp. 101–21.

Kipnis, J. (2002) "24" collection debuts before its second season. *Billboard*, September 7, p. 64.

Kipniss, M. (1994) The death (and rebirth) of Superman. *Discourse*, 16:3, Spring, pp. 144–67.

Kissell, R. (2001) "Smallville" bow super for the WB. *Daily Variety*, October 18, p. 1.

Kit, B. (2008) Summit takes on "Highlander" redo. *The Hollywood Reporter*, May 20.

Knight, C. (2002) Dr Who named Lord of the Sci-Fi Heroes. *The Scotsman*, December 28, p. 6.
Knolle, S. (2006) Multi-authentic, *Daily Variety*, Sept 28, p. 1.
Koeppel, D. (2005) For those of you who wonder how that TV show began. *The New York Times*, March 21, p. C7.
Krieger, T. (1995) "Highlander" fling for fans: Convention for lovers of films, TV series begins today. *The San Francisco Chronicle*, April 14, p. C1.
Kuhn, A. (1984) Women's genres: Melodrama, soap opera, and theory. *Screen*, 25:1, pp. 18–28.
Küng-Shankleman, L. (2000) *Inside the BBC and CNN: Managing Media Organizations*. Routledge, London.
Kushner, D. (2007) Behind the Scenes with *Heroes* Creator Tim Kring and "Hiro," Masi Oka. *Wired* 15:05, March 23, retrieved from: www.wired.com/entertainment/hollywood/news/2007/04/magkring
Lafayette, J. (2006) Zucker to studios: Think web, phones: NBC Universal chief wants shows pitched with digital packages. *Television Week*, March 13, TV Currents section, p. 1.
Lafayette, J. (2007) Google tries to get along with media. *Television Week*, September 24, p. 9.
Lambert, D. (2003) *24*'s TV-on-DVD success leads to new DVD concepts. *TVShowsonDVD.com* October 22, retrieved from: www.tvshowsondvd.com/news/24/764
Laurie Likes Books. (1997) Romance and magic are eternal. *The Romance Reader*, retrieved on August 7, 2000 from: www.theromancereader.com/highlander.html
Leith, S. (2008) Worshipping a superheo from behind the sofa. *The Daily Telegraph*, July 5, p. 26.
Leonard, T. (2002) Guess Who's back. . . . *Daily Star*, July 2, p. 12.
Lerman, N., Oldenziel, R., and Mohun, A. (eds) (2003) *Gender and Technology: A Reader*. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD.
Li, K. (2008) Time Warner plans to split off cable services. *Reuters News Service*, April 30, retrieved from: www.reuters.com/article/industryNews/idUSN3041381420080501?pageNumber=1&virtualBrandChannel=0
Lippert, B. (2007). Rogue Elements. *Adweek*,October 1.
Lisotta, C. (2006) Hyping "Heroes". *Television Week*, July 31, p. 4.
Lister, D. (2005) The fantasy world of television executives. *The Independent* (London), May 28, p. 41.
Lithwick, D. (2008) "The Bauer of suggestion: Our torture policy has deeper roots in Fox television than the Constitution." *Slate.com*, July 26, retrieved December 1, 2009 from: www.slate.com/id/2195864/
Littleton, C. (2007) Nets go on blitz for web hits. *Daily Variety*, June 11, p. 12.
Littleton, C. (2008) Broadcasting its intentions. *Variety*, January 7–13, p. 8.

Lotz, A. (2006) *Redesigning Women: Television after the Network Era*. University of Illinois Press, Urbana, IL, p. 72.
Lotz, A. (2007) *The Television Will Be Revolutionized*. NYU Press, New York.
Lowry, B. (2003) Smallville. *Daily Variety*, October 1, p. 9.
Lowry, B. (2006) Cleared for takeoff. In special report 2: Smallville: 100th episode. *Daily Variety*, January 26, p. B6.
Lyons, M. Sir. (2007) What the BBC is for. Royal Television Society Fleming Memorial Lecture, November 1, retrieved from: www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/news/speeches/ml_what_the_bbc_is_for.html
Mackinnon, K. (1999) After Mulvey: Male erotic objectification. In Aaron, M. (ed.) *The Body's Perilous Pleasures: Dangerous Desires and Contemporary Culture*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, pp. 13–29.
Mahoney, W. (1992) "Highlander" deal reverses typical co-venture tide. *Electronic Media*, August 3, p. 4.
McCabe, J. & Akass, K. (eds.) (2007) *Quality TV: Contemporary American Television and Beyond*. I.B. Tauris, New York.
McCloud, S. (1993) *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. HarperCollins, New York.
McGrath, C. (2006a) The return of the regenerated: A new "Doctor Who". *New York Times*, March 17, p. E30.
McGrath, C. (2006b) Forget the time, Agent Bauer. What year is it? *The New York Times*, May 14, retrieved from: www.nytimes.com
McKee, A. (2007) Why is "City of Death" the best *Doctor Who* story?. In Butler, D. (ed.) *Time and Relative Dissertations in Space: Critical Perspectives on* Doctor Who. Manchester University Press, Manchester, UK, pp. 233–45.
McKelvey, T. (2008) Mile high with John McCain. *Marie Claire*, September, retrieved from: www.marieclaire.com/world/articles/john-mccain-interview
McKie, R. (2005) Timelord triumphs in our age of irony. *The Observer*, March 27, p. 13.
McLean, T. J. (2006) Super expectations. *Daily Variety*, January 26, p. B4.
McMillin, D. C. (2007) *International Media Studies*. Blackwell Publishing, Malden, MA.
McNary, D. (2008) Summit sets "Highlander" remake: Film unit aims to restart franchise. *Variety*, May 20.
McPherson, T. (2007) Techno-soap: *24*, masculinity and hybrid form. In Peacock, S. (ed.) *Reading 24: TV Against the Clock*. I.B. Tauris, London, pp. 173–90.
Meyer, J. (2007) Whatever it takes: The politics of the man behind "24". *The New Yorker* February 19, retrieved from: www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/02/19/070219fa_fact_mayer
Miller, F. with Janson, K. & Varley, L. (1986) *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*. DC Comics, New York.

Miller, T. (2001) The Action Series. In Creeber, G. (ed.) *The Television Genre Book*. British Film Institute, London, pp. 17–18.

Miller, T. (2005) A Metrosexual Eye on *Queer Guy*. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*. 11, 1, pp. 12–117.

Miller, T. (2006) *Gilda* as an industrial object – recuperating textual analysis through political economy. *Eptic* [*Dossiê Especial Cultura e Pensamento, Vol. II – Dinâmicas Culturais*], December, pp. 37–48.

Miller, T. (2008) The Reception Deception. In Goldstin, P. & Machor, J.L. (eds.) *New Directions in American Reception Study*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 353–69.

Miller, T. Govil, N., McMurria, J. and Maxwell, R. (2001) *Global Hollywood*. British Film Institute, London.

Miller, T. Govil, N., McMurria, J. and Wang, T. (2005) *Global Hollywood 2*. British Film Institute, London.

Mittell, J. (2006) Narrative complexity in contemporary American television. *The Velvet Light Trap*, 58, Fall, pp. 29–40.

Modleski, T. (1979) The search for tomorrow in today's soap opera: Notes on a feminine narrative form. *Film Quarterly*, 33:1, pp. 12–21.

Modleski, T. (1983) The rhythms of reception: Daytime television and women's work. In Kaplan, E. A. (ed.) *Regarding Television*, AFI, Los Angeles, pp. 67–75.

Modleski, T. (1986) Femininity as mas(s)querade: A feminist approach to mass culture. In MacCabe, C. (ed.) *High Theory/Low Culture*. St. Martin's Press, New York, pp. 37–52.

Moran, C. (2007) Doctor Who is simply masterful. *The Times*, June 30, reprinted in *TimesOnline*, retrieved from: http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/tv_and_radio/article1989181.ece?print=yes&randnum=1217438233694

Moran, C. (2008) The prime-time lord. *The Times* (London), May 22, p. 2:2.

Moran, A. & Malbon, J. (2006) *Understanding the Global TV Format*. Intellect Books, Bristol, UK.

Morfoot, A. (2005) The definitive WB: Smallville. *Daily Variety*, January 21, special section 1, p. A6.

Morris, M. (1988) *The Pirate's Fiancée: Feminism, Reading, Postmodernism*. Verso, New York.

Mukherjee, R. (2006) *The Racial Order of Things: Cultural Imaginaries of the Post-Soul Era*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Mullen, M. (2003) *The Rise of Cable Programming in the United States*. University of Texas Press, Austin, TX.

Mullen, M. (2008) *Television in the Multichannel Age: A Brief History of Cable Television*. Blackwell Publishing, Malden, MA.

Murdoch, G. (1995) Across the Great Divide: Cultural Analysis and the Condition of Democracy. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 12:1, pp. 89–95.

National Cable & Telecommunications Association. Retrieved December 2008 from: www.ncta.com/Statistic/Statistic/Statistics.aspx

Neale, S. (1993) Masculinity as Spectacle. In Cohan, S. & Hark, I.R. (eds.) *Screening the Male: Exploring Masculinities in Hollywood Cinema*. Routledge, New York, pp. 9–22.

Nelson, R. (2005) Conference review: American quality television. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 8:1, pp. 113–24.

New Media Age. (2003) Fox plans mobile content around biggest TV shows. November, 27, p. 2.

New Vision (2007a) Uganda: People yield to the alure [sic] of television series. *Africa News*, April 26, accessed on LexisNexis 2008.

New Vision (2007b) Uganda: The hottest DVDs this season. *Africa News*, July 28, accessed on LexisNexis 2008.

Newman, K. (2005) *Doctor Who*. BFI TV Classics Series. British Film Institute, London.

Nishimi, L. (2005) Guilty pleasures: Keanu Reeves, Superman, and racial outing. In *East Main Street: Asian American Popular Culture*. New York University Press, New York, pp. 273–91.

Oldenziel, R. (1999) *Making Technology Masculine: Men, Women, and Modern Machines in America 1870-1945*. Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam.

Olson, S. R. (1999) *Hollywood Planet: Global Media and the Competitive Advantage of Narrative Transparency*. Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ.

Ong S. F. (2006), Casting Race in a Better Light. *The Straits Times* (Singapore), Life section, December 7.

Osgerby, B., Gough-Yates, A. & Wells, M. (2001) The business of action: Television history and the development of the action TV series. In Osgerby, B. & Gough-Yates, A. (eds.) *Action TV: Tough Guys, Smooth Operators and Foxy Chicks*, Routledge, London, pp. 13–31.

Ouellette, L. & Hay, J. (2008) *Better Living through Reality TV*. Blackwell Publishing, Malden, MA.

Ouyang, W. -C. (2004) Whose story is it? Sinbad the sailor in literature and film. *Middle Eastern Literatures*, 7, 2, pp. 133–47.

Oxman, S. (2001) I was a teenage Superman. *Variety*, October 15–21, p. 46.

Pandya, N. (2002) Who'd have believed it? *The Guardian*, February 23, p. 25.

Peacock, S. (ed.) (2007) *Reading 24: TV Against the Clock*. I.B. Tauris, London.

Peirce, C. S. (1998) *Chance, Love, and Logic: Philosophical Essays*. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, NB.

Pendleton, J. (2003) WB's super hit wins both sexes. *Advertising Age*, March 24, vol. 74, issue 12, p. S-4.

Penley, C. (1992) Feminism, psychoanalysis, and the study of popular culture. In Grossberg, L., Nelson, C., & Treichler, P. (eds.) *Cultural Studies*. Routledge, New York, pp. 479–500.

Perryman, N. (2008) *Doctor Who* and the convergence of media. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 14:1, pp. 21–39.

Petley, J. (2006) Public service broadcasting in the UK. In Gomery, D. & Hockley, L. (eds.) *Television Industries*. British Film Institute, London, pp. 42–5.

Petro, P. (1986) Mass culture and the feminine: The "place" of television in film studies. *Cinema Journal*, 25:3, Spring, pp. 5–21.

Pfanner, E. (2007) NBC Universal, late for party, joins global gold rush. *The International Herald Tribune*, October 29, p. 10.

Phelan, S. (2005) Carry on Doctor. *The Sunday Herald Magazine*, March 13, p. 6.

Pirates Ahoy! (2006) *Variety*, May 29-June 4, p. 4.

Pollet, A. (2008) It's him behind "Doctor Who". *Los Angeles Times*, February 3, p. E30.

Pollock, S. (2002) Cosmopolitan and vernacular in history. In Brekenridge, C.A., Pollock, S. Bhabha, H.K. & Chakraboarty, D. (eds.) *Cosmopolitanism*. Duke University Press, Durham, NC, pp. 15–53.

Potter, I. (2008) The Filipino Army's advance on Reykjavik: World-building in Studio D and its legacy. In Butler, D. (ed.) *Time and Relative Dissertations In Space: Critical Perspectives on* Doctor Who. Manchester University Press, Manchester, UK, pp. 161–75.

Pratt, S. (2005) Last night's TV: Doctor faces the threat of publicity overdose. *The Northern Echo*, March 28, p. 11.

Produxion.com. (2001) Big issue . . . global smash hits, 22 October, accessed through *LexisNexis Academic* retrieved on February 3, 2008, from: www.lexisnexis.com.silk.library.umass.edu:2048/us/lnacademic/auth/checkbrowser.do?ipcounter=1&cookieState=0&rand=0.014503149654120029&bhcp=1

Projanksy, S. and Ono, K. (1999) Strategic whiteness as cinematic politics. In *Whiteness: The Communication of Social Identity*. Nakayama, T.K. and Martin, J.N. (eds.) Sage Press, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Ramchandani, N. (2005) Why sometimes it's clever to play dumb. *The Guardian*, April 11, p. 11.

Reuters. (2008a) AOL talks with Microsoft, Yahoo heat up. *The New York Times*, July 16, retrieved from: http://www.nytimes.com

Reuters. (2008b) Time Warner cable posts profit ahead of spinoff. *The New York Times*, November 5, retrieved from: ww.nytimes.com

Reynolds, R. (1992) *Super Heroes: A Modern Mythology*. University Press of Mississippi, Jackson.

Rice-Barker, L. (1998) Canadians sash in at MIPCOM. *Playback*, October 21, p. 1.

Rich, F. (2005) We'll win this war – on "24". *The New York Times*, January 9, section 2, p. 1.

Robinson, S. (2000) *Marked Men: White Masculinity in Crisis*. Columbia University Press, New York.

Robischon, N. (2005) Thanks to cellphones, TV screens get smaller. *The New York Times*, February 15, retrieved from: www.nytimes.com/2005/02/15/arts/television/15cell.html

Rosett, C. (2001) TV: A menu of superheroes – world series has them in spades, but so, too, do Fox and WB; a spy and a boy from Krypton. *The Wall Street Journal*, November 5, p. A19.

Rowland, P. (2005) The Dalek is so iconic you can't resist buying it when you see one, so people have just snapped them off the shelves. *Western Mail*, December 22, p. 4.

Russell, G. (2006) *Doctor Who: The Inside Story*. BBC Books, London.

Sadler, R. L. (2005) *Electronic Media Law*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Schneider, M. (2001) First Look: Smallville. *Daily Variety*, September 14, p. A19.

Schneider, M. (2009) Peacock-Blocked. *Daily Variety*, July 28, p. 1.

Schneider, M. & Adalian, J. (2000) Duchovny puts 'X' on Fox deal. *Daily Variety*, May 18, p. 1.

Scott, V. (1996) Entertainment (November 27) [Wire Service]. United Press International, cited April 2002.

Sherwin, A. (2002) Doctor Who defeats the Met in battle for Tardis. *The Times* (London), October 23, p. 6.

Sherwin, A. (2004) Inner pain of the new Doctor Who. *The Times* (London), April 29, p. 3.

Sherwin, A. (2005) Who's the daddy as 10m find time to see the Doctor. *The Times* (London), March 28, p. 9.

Sherwin, A. (2006) Sidekick whose time has come. *The Times* (London), July 5, p. 5.

Sherwood, R. (1996) Historic agreements: Like its mythic hero, 'Highlander' has a distinctly international flair. *The Hollywood Reporter*, December 3, pp. S6, S30-S42.

Shimpach, S. (2002) Review of ''Action TV: Tough Guys, Smooth Operators and Foxy Chicks''. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 5:3, September, pp. 368–71.

Shohat, E. & Stam, R. (1996) From the imperial family to the transnational imaginary: media spectatorship in the age of globalization. In Wilson, R. & Dissanayake, W. (eds.) *Global/Local: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginary*, Duke University Press, NC, pp. 145–70.

Siegel, J. & Shuster, *J.* (1997) *Superman: The Action Comics Archives Edition*, vol. 1, DC Comics, New York, pp. 11.

Simpson, M. (2002) Meet the Metrosexual. *Salon.com*, July 22.

Simpson, R. (2003) Doctor Who is the greatest cult TV hero ... of all time. *The Evening Star* (London), June 6, p. 17.

Sinclair, J., Jacka, E. & Cunningham, S. (eds.) (1996). *New Patterns in Global Television: Peripheral Vision*. Oxford University Press, New York, pp. 1–32.

Sokolsky, B. (1992) Venturing into a super void in "Highlander". *The Press-Enterprise*, November 9, p. A06.

Somigli, L. (1998) The superhero with a thousand faces: visual narratives on film and paper. In Horton, A. & McDougal, S.Y. (eds.) *Play It Again, Sam: Retakes on Remakes.* University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, pp. 279–94.

Spigel, L. (2004) Introduction. In Spigel, L. & Olsson, J. (eds.) *Television After TV: Essays on a Medium in Transition*. Duke University Press, Durham, NC, pp. 1–34.

Smith, A. (2004) Time lad scores with sex and Daleks. *Scotland on Sunday*, June 6, p. 3.

Smith, R. (2003) Time Lord to return ... but who is to play him? *The Evening Standard* (London), September 26, p. 2.

Smith-Shomade, B. E. (2002) *Shaded Lives: African American Women and Television*. Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, NJ.

Spence, L. (2005) *Watching Daytime Soap Operas: The Power of Pleasure*. Wesleyan UP, Middletown, CT.

Stanley, T. L. (2006) Supercharged. *Advertising Age*, March 20, p. cover.

Stein, L. E. (2005) "They cavort, you decide": Transgenericism, queerness, and fan interpretation in teen TV. *Spectator*, special issue, Get a Life? Fan Cultures and Contemporary Television, 25:1, Spring, pp. 11–22.

Steinberg, B. (2007) NBC's pod plan: Share top slots; 'Hybrid' spots that promote both marketers and shows are net's latest ploy to keep viewers in seats. *Advertising Age*, December 3, p. 3.

Stephenson, D. (2006) Power of the Prime Time Lord. *Sunday Express*, August 6, p. 10.

Stephenson, D. (2008) Doctor Dosh. *Sunday Express*, April 6, p. 10.

Straubhaar, J. D. (2007) *World Television: From Global to Local.* Sage, London.

Studlar, G. (1996) *This Mad Masquerade: Stardom and Masculinity in the Jazz Age*. Columbia University Press, New York.

Sutherland, K. (2007) Interview on *Charlie Rose.* PBS, January 12.

Sutherland, K. (2008) Interview on *Charlie Rose.* PBS, November 20.

Szadkowski, J. (2006) Places of "heroes"worship. *The Washington Times*, October 8, p. D01.

Tasker, Y. (2001) Kung fu: Re-orienting the television western. In Osgerby, B. & Gough-Yates, A. (eds.) *Action TV: Tough Guys, Smooth Operators and Foxy Chicks.* Routledge, London, pp. 115–26.

Taves, B. (1993) *The Romance of Adventure: The Genre of Historical Adventure Movies.* University Press of Mississippi, Jackson, MS.

Taylor, A. (2007) "He's gotta be strong, he's gotta be fast, he's gotta be larger than life": Investigating the engendered superhero body. *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 40:2, pp. 344–60.

Taylor, P. W. (1995) Co-productions – content and change: International television in the Americas. *Canadian Journal of Communications*, 20, 3, retrieved from: www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/888/794.

Telefilm Canada. Telefilm Canada. Retrieved in 2002 from: www.telefilm.gc.ca/en/intro.htm

Television Week (2007) Editorial: Increased diversity begins behind the scenes. *Television Week*, March 5, p. 12.

Thomas, S. (1997) There can be only one: The making of "Highlander: the series". Season one (#1 November). RetroVision, retrieved April 9, 2002, from: www.retrovisionmag.com/issue1.htm

Thompson, R. J. (1996) *Television's Second Golden Age*. Continuum, New York.

Tinic, S. (2003) Going global: International coproductions and the disappearing domestic audience in Canada. In Parks, L. & Kumar, S. (eds.) *Planet TV: A Global Television Reader*. New York University Press, New York pp. 169–86.

Todorov, T. (1975) *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY.

Tulloch, J. & Alvarado, M. (1983) *Doctor Who: The Unfolding Text*. St. Martin's Press, New York.

Turner, L. (2008) The new Doctor Who provides an opportunity to investigate science fiction. *The Guardian*, April 15, p. 7.

Variety. (2002) What US hours make abroad. April 15–21, p. A1.

Waid, M. (2004) *Superman Birthright: The Origin of the Man of Steel*. DC Comics, New York.

Wales on Sunday. (2008) Daleks speak to all nations. July 13, p. 3, also available at: www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/2008/07/13/daleks-speak-to-all-nations-91466-21331585/

Walker, J. & Ferguson, D. (1998) *The Broadcast Television Industry*. Allyn and Bacon, Boston.

Wallace, A. (2007) Nastier than a speeding bullet. *Condé Nast Portfolio*, October, pp. 102–12.

Wandtke, T.R. (2007) Introduction: Once upon a time once again. In Wandtke, T.R. (ed.) *The Amazing Transforming Superhero!* McFarland & Co., Jefferson, NC, pp. 5–32.

Weinraub, B. (2001) A fantastical plot made real over time. *The New York Times*, November 4, retrieved December 1, 2009 from: www.nytimes.com/2001/11/04/tv/cover-story-a-fantastical-plot-made-real-over-time.html

Wen-Chin, O. (2004), Whose Story Is It? Sindbad the Sailor in Literature and Film. *Middle Eastern Literatures*, 7, 2 (2004).

Williams, B. (1994a) "North to the Future": *Northern Exposure* and Quality Television, in Newcomb, H. (ed.) *Television: The Critical View* 5th ed., Oxford University Press, New York, pp. 141–54.

Williams, L. (1988) Melodrama Revised In Browne, N. (ed) *Refiguring American Film Genres*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 42–88.
Williams, P. (1994b) Feeding off the past: The evolution of the television rerun. *Journal of Popular Film & Television* 21, 4, pp. 162–75.
Williams, R. (1974, 1990) *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*. Routledge, New York.
Woolf, P. (2007) So what are you saying? An oil consortium's behind the nukes? *24*, programme sponsorship, SUV's, and the "War on Terror". In Peacock, S. (ed.) *Reading 24: TV Against the Clock*. I.B. Tauris, London, pp. 73–84.
Wright, B. W. (2001) *Comic Book Nation: The Transformation of Youth Culture in America*. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD.
Yockey, M. (2008) Somewhere in time: Utopia and the return of Superman. *The Velvet Light Trap*, 61, Spring, pp. 26–37.
Zeitchik, S. (2006) Can content ring in revs? *Daily Variety*, March 3, p. 1.
Zizek, S. (2006) The depraved heroes of *24* are the Himmlers of Hollywood. *The Guardian* January 10, retrieved from: www.guardian.co.uk/media/2006/jan/10/usnews.comment

Websites

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dragonfire
www.highlander-official.com/index.html
http://smallville.wikia.com/wiki/Smallville_Wiki
www.kryptonsite.com
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=533204&pid=10500413&st=6165index
www.lsoft.com/scripts/wl.exe?SL1=HIGHLA-L&H=LISTS.PSU.EDU

INDEX

Abbas, A. 67, 87, 91
ABC 15, 20, 21, 101, 106, 129
Abramowitz, David
  as Creative Consultant 73–4
  cultural differences 77, 78, 197n15
  DVD 52–3
  moral questions 84–5
  televisuality 70
  writers 196n5
Acland, C. 56
Action Comics 96, 104, 119
action genre 7, 9
  audience 31–2
  citizenship 146
  cliff-hangers 140–1
  mobility 66–7
  re-imagined 33
  televisuality 36
  see also heroes; heroines
Adalian, J. 127, 139, 141, 182
Adams, Douglas 164, 205n18
adventure stories 67
The Adventures of Superman 34, 103, 104, 202n33
advertisers 17, 138, 141, 182
Advertising Age 100–1, 135, 183, 185
AdWeek 184
affiliated networks 17
Afghanistan invaded 125
afterlife
  heroes 7, 189
  Heroes 186
  program 4, 8, 10, 28, 51, 56, 58, 99–100, 158–9
Ageyman, Freema 176, 204n11
Alias 31, 200n17
Alien Autopsy 129
All American Comics 96
All in the Family 134
Allen, R. 20
Ally McBeal 127
Alvarado, M. 75, 89, 93, 163–4, 177, 190n1, 207–8n37
Alyn, Kirk 103
America Online, Inc. 97
American Airlines Flight 587 125
American Express 106
American Idol 135
American Quality Television 129, 133, 135, 170, 178
America's Most Wanted 128
Amuse Video 74
Andrae, T. 47, 103, 104, 109, 119, 120
Angel 84, 169, 200n8
AOL-Time-Warner 97
assimilationism 103
Atom Man vs. Superman 103
audience
  action genre 31–2
  advertisers 17

audience (*cont'd*)
attractions for 28–9
coalition of 101–2
composite 47
demographics 128
distribution 3
ethnicity 192–3n1
family gathering 156–7, 160–2, 171
fragmented 8, 10, 15, 24, 28, 29, 30–1, 47, 48, 101, 155, 189
gender differences 100
genre 30
global 24
heroes 44
Highlander: The Series 77–8
investment in program 4–5
mainstream 32, 100, 193n1
mass 32, 100
minority 6
niche 18, 33
programming strategies 32
ratings 19, 20, 28, 48
saturation 2–3
Smallville 100–1
targets changing 76
see also viewers
Aurthur, K. 101, 119, 122
Autons 154, 173
The Avengers 34, 86

backstory 50
Doctor Who 171–2, 175
Highlander: The Series 80, 85
Superman 102, 104–5
Baker, Tom 203n1
Banks, M. J. 116
Barrowman, John 176
Barsanti, C. 150
Batman 34, 104
Battlestar Galactica 49
Bauer, Jack
bodily suffering 40–1, 150
Counter-Terrorist Unit 132–3
daughter 130
guilt 46
masculinity 147–8
time 126, 149, 189
torture 142, 144, 146, 147–51, 203n9
travels 9
villains 175
voice-over 138
BBC
cultural role 12
license fees 160–1
public service broadcasting 154–5, 162, 177
Reith 203n3
technological change 155
see also Doctor Who
BBC America 167
BBC One 155
BBC Online 204n9
BBC Worldwide 159, 167, 205n12
bbc.co.uk 204n9
BBCi 204n9
Beastmaster 66, 67, 81
Benhabib, S. 61
Berlusconi, Silvio 74
Berman, Gail 139, 150
BET 19
The Beverly Hillbillies 134
Beverly Hills 90210 127
Bianco, R. 126
Bibb, Bob 101, 111
Big Brother 26
Bionic Woman 31
Birds of Prey 31
BitTorrent 52
Blade 31
blogs 51, 59
Boddy, W. 54
body
damaged 149
eroticism 42

ethnicity 40
heroes 35, 39–44
male 40, 41, 42, 114, 193n3
objectification 38, 39, 41
romance 83–5
suffering 40, 114, 150
violence 40–1
visual pleasure 40, 41
Bordo, S. 41
Bould, M. 165
brand equity 95–6, 98
brand identity 64, 126–7, 128
brand management 97, 98
branding
Doctor Who 159–60, 205n12
heroes 30
Highlander: The Series 52–3
identity 58
intellectual property 50, 54, 98
licensing 68–9
Superman 94–5, 97, 98
Branson, Richard 185
Bravo 19
Break.com 182
Brennan, S. 75, 76
Briggs, Ian 207–8n37
Brioux, B. 111
Britishness 162–6, 178
broadband internet service 15, 49
broadcast television 2, 3, 10
Broadcasting Act 205n17
Broe, D. 135, 143
Buffy the Vampire Slayer 31, 51, 81, 88, 100, 113, 169, 200n8
Bukatman, S. 102
Byrne, John 107
Byrnes, Jim 195n1

cable channels 14, 15, 18, 19, 20
cable subscription 14, 19
Cain, Dean 118
Caldwell, J. T.
conglomerates 31, 32
loss leaders 136–7
stylistic exhibitionism 131, 165
televisuality 5, 14, 26–8, 69, 132–3
videographic look 132
viewing rates 20
Canada
Filmline 74
funding for *Doctor Who* 169
funding for *Highlander: The Series* 196n11
quota markets 71, 72
Canadian Television Fund 196n11
Cardiff 169
Carey, Drew 26
Carr, C. 130
Carter, John 102
Cartmel, Andrew 207–8n37
CATV (Community Antenna Television) 19
CBC 169
CBN 19
CBS 15, 20, 21, 26, 128, 134
Celebrity Boxing 129, 134
CGI (computer-generated imagery) 14, 165
Chamberlain, D. 130, 132, 134, 136
Chapman, James 168, 207–8n37
character 9, 29, 36
Charmed 100, 200n8
Cheney, Dick 144
Chernin, Peter 139
Chertoff, Michael 144, 145
cinematography 131–2
Cinemax 19
citizenship 60–2, 146
Cleopatra 2525 31
cliff-hangers 140–1
CNC 74
CNN 19, 27
Cochran, Robert 126, 145
Cold War 34

Columbia Pictures: *Superman* 103
Comcast 191
comic books
  body 41
  colors used 117–18
  digital 180
  Heroes 186–7
  media-crossing 103
  online 184
  Superman 202n33
commercial broadcasting 4, 15, 16–17
commercials, integrated 138
commodification 21, 60, 68
Communications Act 156
Community Antenna Television (CATV) 19
community of affinity 58
competition 15, 24, 27, 127, 155, 202n5
computer-generated imagery (CGI) 14, 165
Comstock, Beth 185–6
conglomerates 16, 21, 31–2, 97–9
Connery, Sean 195n3
consumer technologies 15
consumerism 34
content 27, 72–3
content commissioning 52
controversy 24
convergence culture 15, 50–1, 52, 53
Coogan, P. 103
co-production
  international 7, 10, 25, 69, 71–80, 90, 189
  rules of 73
  treaty-based 25
Cops 128
The Cosby Show 202n6
cosmopolitanism
  aspirational 61–2
  globalization 67–8, 79–80, 90
  Highlander: The Series 67–8, 79, 90–3, 116
  identity 64
  immortality 11, 86, 90–3
  neo-liberalism 62–3, 93, 177
  Pollock 68
  transcendence 64
Cosmopolitanism 62–3
counter-identification 4–5
Counter-Terrorist Unit 132–3
Coupling 14, 169
co-ventures 25
crime sensationalism 128
Crocodile Dundee 91
cross-ownership in media 21, 129
The Crow: Stairway to Heaven 31
CSI 138
C-SPAN 19
Cull, N. 162–3
cult following 4–5
cultural differences 77, 78, 197n15
cultural imperialism 34
culture
  co-production 71–80
  gender 194n2
  globalization 63, 64–5
Curtin, M. 28–9
Cushing, Peter 204n5
Cuthbert, Elisha 130
CW 15
Cybermen 154
cyberspace 1

The Daily Show 144
Daily Telegraph 158
Daily Variety 20, 109, 114–16, 115, 132, 139, 184, 185, 195n4
Daleks 153, 154
Daltrey, Roger 71, 199n34
Dancing with the Stars 167
Daniels, Susanne 22, 97, 109, 111–12, 192–3n1

Dark Angel 31, 127
Dark City 149
The Dark Knight Returns (Miller) 104–5
Davidson, Peter 175–6
Davies, Russell T. 160, 164, 165, 166, 168, 169, 171, 172, 205n17
Davis, Peter 52–3
Dawson's Creek 51, 200n8
dayparted schedules 17
DBS (direct broadcast satellite) 15, 191n9, 194n1
DC Comics 96, 98–9, 106, 107
Deans, J. 159
deconglomeration 191–2n13
deficit financing 17, 24, 191n6
Delany, Samuel R. 81–2
Deluise, Dom 71
Deluise, Peter 71
Dempsey, J. 20
Denison, R. 106, 108, 115
Detective Comics 96
digital video disk: *see* DVD
digital video recorder: *see* DVR
direct broadcast satellite: *see* DBS
discussion boards 59
disidentification 4
Disney Studios 21, 187
distribution 3, 24
Do It Yourself television 15
The Doctor
  and assistants 152, 174, 175–6
  hero 170–8
  humanized 172
  loneliness 46, 171
  masculinity 176
  as outsider 177–8
  quoted 158
  regeneration 153, 154, 159
  sexuality 41, 176
  Time Lord 12, 45, 149, 153, 154, 175, 178
  travels 9
  uniqueness 173
Doctor Who 7
  backstory 171–2, 175
  bodily suffering 40
  Britishness 162–6, 178
  Canadian funding 169
  conventions 159
  emotional content 172, 174
  ethnic diversity 177
  family audience 156–7, 171
  fan-based activities 158, 159
  franchising 159
  global marketplace 166–70
  guest writers 169–70
  length of run 153
  licensing tie-ins 158
  made-for-tv-movie 158
  marketing campaign 52
  melodrama 172–3
  merchandising 158, 167
  multi-platform convergence 52
  narrative buildup 171
  as national heritage 162, 163, 165
  national identity 166
  nostalgia 171
  origins 152–3
  production costs 207n29
  as public service broadcast 8, 64, 178
  regeneration 12, 158–60, 167, 189
  relaunch 52, 153–4, 156, 157
  "Rose" 154, 173
  science fiction 35–6
  self-confident 162
  semiotics 207–8n37
  "The Shakespeare Code" 176
  showrunner 169–70
  "The Sound of Drums" 177
  stand-alone episodes 168
  as superbrand 159–60, 205n12
  "An Unearthly Child" 152, 173–4

Doctor Who (*cont'd*)
visual style 168–9
website 159
see also The Doctor
domestic content rules 71–2
domestic melodrama 35–6, 37
The Donation 141
Donner, Richard 97, 118
DOTCOMEDY.com 179
Douglas, Tommy 145
Dus Ka Dum 26
DVD (digital video disk) 14, 15, 23, 48–9, 52, 56
DVD boxed sets 51, 140
DVR (digital video recorder) 23, 48–9

E! Channel 59
Eastman, S. T. 20
Easton, Sheena 71
Eccleston, Christopher 154, 160, 170, 174, 175
Eco, Umberto 104, 108, 120, 121, 122, 123
economic growth 62
economic imperialism 34
Economist 162
economy of abundance 3, 189
economy of scarcity 2, 3, 17–18
Electronic Media 75
Elektra refords 98
Elmer, G. 192n17
Entertainment Tonight 59
Entertainment Weekly 59, 98, 180
ephemerality 17, 23, 188
episodic narrative structure 14, 36–7
episodic seriality 118–19, 122, 134–5, 190n1
eroticism 40, 42, 43, 44
ESPN 19
ethnic diversity 59, 177, 186, 192–3n1
European Union 71–2
Europudding 78, 79, 85
exceptionalism 64
exhibitionism, stylistic 27, 29, 70, 82, 132, 133
extra-diegesis 89
Eye for an Eye 149

Fairbanks, Douglas 34, 45
family audience 156–7, 160–2, 171
fan-based activities 4, 82, 159, 181
fantasy genre
conventions 89
Doctor Who 169
genre 119
heroes 147
teen 110
transcendence 92, 93
FCC (Federal Communications Commission) 17–18, 20–1, 128–9, 191n7, 191n11
Felicity 100, 200n8
La Femme Nikita 31, 66, 67, 202n3
Ferguson, D. A. 20
fiber optics 23
Fielding, Janet 176
Filmline 74
Fin-Syn (financial interest and syndication regulations) 18, 21–2, 99, 129
first-run syndication 8, 31, 75, 76
flashbacks 45, 81, 82, 84, 86–8, 91, 92, 149
Flashforward 188
Fleischer studios 103, 199n4
Flint, J. 128
flow theory 5
Ford Motor Company 141
Forever Knight 66
Fox Broadcasting 129
Fox Network
brand identity 126–7, 128
competition 15, 127

and FCC 20, 128–9
innovation 11–12
News Corp. 21
O.C. 101
quality programming 126
raunch 129, 133–4
repeats/repurposing 139
Smallville 99
stunting 128–9, 130
see also 24
Fox News Channel 144
France 71, 72, 74
franchising 191n9
Freesat 155
French-Canadian co-productions 71–2, 197n13, 197n14
Friedman, W. 127
Furie, Sidney J. 106
Fuselage.com 181

Gaines, J. 95, 105, 120, 121
Gardner, Julie 161, 167, 168, 170
Gasher, M. 192n17
Gatiss, Mark 169, 207n35
Gaumont S. A. 68
Gaumont Television 68, 74, 77, 78
gaze 42
gender differences 43, 100, 135
gender factors 7, 10, 37–9, 59, 194n2
General Electric 21, 187
genre 33–7
action shows 9, 32
audience 30
fantasy 119
gender 10, 37–9
hybridity 36
narrative 10, 67
recombinant 82, 84–5, 88–9, 90
semiotics 81–2, 89
Smallville 101
television 82
textuality 35
translatability 63, 82–3, 89–90
viewers 81–2
Genzlinger, N. 110
geopolitical factors 12
Germany 74, 77
Gibson, William: *Neuromancer* 1
Gift, Roland 71
Gilmore Girls 100, 200n8
Ginsburg, M. 68, 75, 76, 77, 78
global economics 1, 24–6
Global Hollywood (Miller) 73
global marketing 26, 166–70
globalization
cosmopolitanism 67–8, 79–80, 90
culture 63, 64–5
neo-liberal economics 79–80
Goetzl, D. 127
Goldstein, Lewis 111
Google/YouTube 182
Gord, Ken 73, 77, 81, 82, 86, 88–9
Gordon, H. 144, 150
Gordon, I. 123
gothic horror 35, 40
Gough, Alfred 108, 110, 111, 115, 122
Govil, N. 88
Gracen, Elizabeth Ward 71, 196n8
Grade, Michael 52, 157, 204n8
Graham, Matthew 169
graphic user interface 132
Graser, M. 184, 185
grazing behavior 23
Greed 129
Green Acres 134
Greiner, D. 45
Grey's Anatomy 24
Guardian 144, 159
guest stars 70–1
Guider, E. 74

The Half Hour News Hour 144
Hartley, John 78–9, 156–7

Hartnell, William 153
Hawes, James 161
Haysbert, Dennis 150
HBO 19, 27
Head, Anthony 206n25
Herald Tribune 187
Hercules: The Legendary Journeys 66
Heritage Foundation 145
Herman, E. S. 194n8
heroes 7, 30–1
  afterlife 7, 189
  body 35, 39–44
  branding 30
  The Doctor 170–8
  eroticization 44
  establishmentarian 104
  fantasy 147
  female audience 44
  heterogeneity growing 31
  identity 47
  imperialism 33
  as intellectual property 30
  loneliness 84, 85, 93, 171
  MacLeod as 81–90, 175
  masculinity 31, 33, 37
  media-crossing 103
  mobility 44–6
  nostalgia 46–7
  objectification 44
  race 9
  re-imagined 30–1
  white male 7, 9, 10, 84
Heroes 208n6
  afterlife 186
  buzzmetrics 181
  comic book inspiration 186–7
  ethnic diversity 186
  global reach 24
  Kring 179, 182–3, 186
  multi-media 180–1
  narrative style 180
  NBC 8, 12
  Nissan 183–4
  promotion 181–3
  website 181
Heroes: Origins 183
heroines 31, 67
Hibbard, J. 109, 111
Highlander: The Search for Vengeance 195n4
Highlander: The Series 7
  audiences 75–6, 77–8
  backstory 80, 85
  bodily suffering 40
  budget 75
  cinematic quality 69
  commercial success 68, 76
  constraints 79
  co-production 67–8, 69, 85–6, 90
  cosmopolitanism 67–8, 79, 90–3, 116
  eroticism 43
  exhibitionism 82
  fandom 82
  flashbacks 45, 81, 82, 84, 86–8, 91, 92
  global reach 85–6
  guest stars 70–1
  identity 87
  as intellectual property 68–9
  international joint-venture 10, 71–80, 189
  internationalism 86
  licensing brand 68–9
  marketing and branding 52–3
  masculinity 81
  merchandising 92
  moral questions 84–5
  multi-genre 35
  origins of 68
  paradox of 92–3
  promotional material 70
  The Raven 31
  re-imagined 33

Rules 81, 87
spectacle 83
syndicated 8, 75, 76
televisuality 69, 70, 92
in US 75–6, 77, 195n4
video games 195n4
videos/DVDs 196n8
voice-over 80, 194–5n1
see also MacLeod, Duncan
Highlander film 68
Highlander: The Source 195n4
Hill, J. 163
Hinchcliffe, Philip 163
Hirschfield, March 186
Hollywood 34, 36
Homicide: Life on the Street 49
horizontal integration 21
Hoskins, C. 197n13
How I Met Your Mother 14
Hulu.com 14, 138
Huyssen, A. 194n2

I Spy 86
iconography 3, 117–18
identification 4–5, 42
identity
angst 115–16
branding 58
consumerism 34
cosmopolitanism 64
heroes 47
Highlander: The Series 81
masculinity 114
narrative 36
national 78, 157, 166
space/time 64
viewers 48, 60–1
Imagine Entertainment 139
immortality
cosmopolitanism 11, 86, 90–3
MacLeod 10–11, 45, 66
nostalgia 46–7
Peirce on 66
imperialism 33, 34, 67
In Living Color 128
Independent News Company 96
infotainment 14
Ingraham, Laura 144
innovation 5, 6, 12
institutional practices 2, 3, 6–7, 10
intellectual property 3–4
branding 50, 54, 98
commercialization 94
global marketing 26
heroes 30
legislation 62
piracy 182
programs 4, 23–4, 29
revenue 54
Superboy 52
Superman 100
interactive internet adventures 52
international co-production 71–80
international joint-venture 10, 25, 67–8, 71, 74, 85–6
internet episodes 14–15
intertextuality 116–17, 118
investment, viewers 4–5, 57, 58–9, 99–100
iPlayer 155
iPods 23, 56, 125, 184
Italy 74
iTunes 14, 138, 184
ITV 157, 166

Jagger, Mick 197n15
Janson, Klauss 105
Japan 74, 77
Jeffords, S. 34–5, 45, 193n3
Jenkins, H. 53, 55
Jensen, J. 180
Jett, Joan 71
Johnson, R. 164

Jones, C. 112–13
Jones, G. 102
Jones, Martha 176–7
Joyrich, L. 193n5
Justice League of America 106

Kativa, Stana 208n3
Kaye, J. 77
Kennedy, John F. 152
Kent, Clark
  alienation 111
  aspirational 110
  deferral 11, 119
  emotional development 111–12
  indestructibility 46–7
  and Luthor 194n9, 201n20, 201n29
  melancholy 120
  national trauma 113
  objectified 41
  quoted 94
  special effects 9
  super powers 114
  Superman identity 45, 107
  teenage angst 112–14
  time 149
  villains 175
  virginity 119, 201n28
Khan, Salman 26
Khanna, Roma 186
Kidder, Margot 118
King, K. 43, 196n8
Kinney National Company 97
Kirsch, Stan 79, 91, 93, 198n30
Kissell, R. 101
Klein, Paul 190n5
Krieger, T. 91
Kring, Tim 179, 182–3, 186
kryptonite 106, 113
Kung Fu 84
Küng-Shankleman, L. 23
Kushner, D. 180

Lambert, Christopher 70, 195n3
Lambert, Verity 204–5n11
Law & Order 139
The League of Gentlemen 169
Leith, S. 162
Leno, Jay 188
Lester, Richard 118
Levitz, Paul 108
Levy, Peter 131–2
license fees 155, 160–1
licensing
  brands 68–9
  cultural differences 77
  program formats 16–17, 26, 27
Life on Mars 14, 167, 169
Likes, Laurie 91
Limbaugh, Rush 144
Lithwick, Dahlia 144
Littleton, C. 22, 97, 109, 111, 112, 179
location 7, 37
Lois and Clark (ABC) 106, 123
loneliness of heroes 84, 85, 93, 171
Los Angeles 25
Los Angeles Times 164, 166
Lost 14, 49, 181, 188
Lost Boys 149
The Lost World 66, 67
Lotz, Amanda 201n30
Luthor, Lex 114, 194n9, 201n20, 201n29
Lyons, Michael 155–6

McCain, John 144, 203n10
McChesney, R. 194n8
McCloud, S. 117–18
McCluggage, Kerry 21–2
McCoy, Sylvester 207n37
MacFadden, Bernarr 102

Macfadden Publishing 200n10
McFadyen, S. 197n13
McFarland, Roland 143
McGann, Paul 158
McGrath, Charles 141, 164
Mack, Allison 51
McKie, R. 175
McLean, T. J. 108
MacLeod, Duncan 9
  cosmopolitanism 90–3
  flashbacks 149
  immortality 10–11, 45, 66
  international 86
  loneliness 84, 85, 93
  roles 81–90
  Scottish accent 87
  as warrior/lover/wanderer 81–90, 175
McLure Syndicate 103
McPherson, T. 37, 149, 202–3n8
made-for-tv-movie, *Doctor Who* 158
Mahoney, W. 74, 75, 76
Maier, Steven 197n18
"The Making of *Highlander: The Series*" 196n7
male body 41, 42, 114, 193n3
The Man from U.N.C.L.E. 34, 86
The Man of Steel (Byrne) 107
M.A.N.T.I.S. 31
Manze, Vince 182
Marich, R. 77
marketing 20–1, 52–3
Married ... With Children 128
Marsters, James 206n25
Martial Law 31
The Mary Tyler Moore Show 134
masculinity
  agency 47
  Bauer 147–8
  challenged 38, 43
  The Doctor 176
  genre/gender 37–9
  heroes 31, 33, 37
  Highlander: The Series 81
  hyper 193n5
  identity 114
  objectification 81
  performance 38, 39–40
  retrograde 81
  as signifier 38, 39, 44, 46
  stoicism 46–7
  subjectivity 42
  torture 147
  white 10, 34–5, 39, 81
The Master 154, 165, 177
melancholia 120
melodrama 35–6, 37, 116, 172–3
merchandising 15, 30
  Doctor Who 158, 167
  Highlander: The Series 92
  Smallville 98
  Superman 103, 106
  24 137
meta-textuality 9, 52, 58, 199n1
Metromedia 202n7
metrosexual 39
Meyer, Jane 144
The Mill 165
Millar, Miles 110, 111, 118, 119, 123
Miller, Frank 104–5
Miller, John 182
Miller, T. 25, 73, 74, 145–6
minority programming 6
Mission: Impossible 34
mobile phone episodes: *see* mobisodes
mobile phones 23
mobility
  action genre 66–7
  heroes 44–6
  privatization 56
  programming 66–7
  spatial 33, 34, 47, 56–7, 94–5
  temporal 47, 56–7, 94–5
  virtual/actual 56–7

mobisodes 14–15, 49, 51, 52, 99, 138, 142
MobiTV 185
Moffat, Steven 160, 169, 204n10, 205n14
Moll, Richard 70–1
moral questions 84–5, 112–13
Moran, C. 162, 166
Morfoot, A. 110
Morris, M. 91
MSOs (multi-system operators) 19, 191
MTM 134
MTV 19, 27
Mukherjee, R. 39, 41
Mulcahy, Russell 68
Mullen, M. 18, 19
multichannels 15, 191n9
multiculturalism 38
multi-system operators (MSOs) 19, 191
Must-*See* TV 182
Mutant X 66
MyNetworkTV 15

narrative
  backstory 50
  character-driven 29
  commercialized 33–4
  genre 10, 67
  identity 36
  sado-masochistic 41
  Smallville 101–8, 120–1
  strategies 2, 5, 9
  structures 9, 14
  supplementary material 49
  torture 145, 146, 150–1, 203n9, 203n12
  translatable 30, 32, 69
narrative programming 26
narrowcasting 31
National Allied Publishing 96
National Association of Television Programme Executives 52
National Cable & Telecommunications Association 19
National Comics 96
national heritage 162, 163, 165
national identity 78, 157, 166
National Periodical Publications 96–7
national trauma 113
Navarro, Joe 203n13
NBC 8, 12, 15, 20, 21, 127, 181
NBC Rewind 184
NBC Universal 179, 183, 187, 191
NBC.com 180–1
Neale, S. 42, 46
neo-liberal economics
  cosmopolitanism 62–3, 93, 177
  globalization 79–80
  market logics 15
  regulatory practices 74
netlet tweens 99–101
networks
  ratings 28
  stunting 127–8
  viewers 18
  websites 14
Neuromancer (Gibson) 1
new international division in cultural labor (NICL) 25
The New York Post 129
The New York Times 101, 135, 140, 149
The New Yorker 133, 143, 144, 203n13
Newman, Sydney 157, 204n11
News Corp 21, 129
news programming 14
Newsweek 144
niche targeting 31, 33
Nickelodeon 19
NICL (new international division in cultural labor) 25

Nielsen Media Research 181, 191n7, 198n21
Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm 102
9thwonders.com 181
Nissan 183–4, 186, 208n5
non-content exclusions 73
Northern Exposure 49
nostalgia 46–7, 160–1, 171

objectification
  body 38, 39, 41
  eroticism 40
  heroes 44
  masculinity 81
  sexuality 42
Observer 169
Ofcom 156
"Official Highlander Web Page" 199n32
Oka, Masi 187
Olsen, Jimmy 105–6
on-demand 14, 15, 48–9, 52, 185
Ong, S. F. 187
Ono, K. 41
Osgerby, B. 30, 89
O'Toole, Annette 118
outtakes 49
Ouyang, W.-C. 195n2
ownership 21, 22, 199n2
  see also intellectual property
Oxman, S. 114

Paglia, C. 41
Painkiller Jane 31
Panzer, Bill 52–3, 69, 84, 199n32
Paramount Studios 21, 103
Paramount Television Group 21
Paris 79
patriotism 112–13
Paul, Adrian 41, 79, 80, 83, 93, 148, 194–5n1
Pax 20
pay-per-view 23
peer-to-peer file sharing protocols 51–2
Peirce, C. S. 66
Pendleton, J. 100, 101, 111
Penley, C. 42–3
Perelman, Ronald 128
performance 34–5, 38, 39–40
personal computer 15, 23
Petley, J. 154–5, 156
Pfanner, E. 187–8
Piper, Billie 161, 165
Piper, Roddy 71
piracy 52, 182, 194n1
podcast commentaries 52
police series 35, 77
Pollet, A. 164
Pollock, S. 68, 74
Popular 51
Potter, I. 164
Powell, Jonathan 204n8
Power of 10 26
Primatech Corporation 180–1
"Princes of the Universe" 80
privatization 56
product placement 180–1, 183
production costs 25
production style 12, 27, 28
production values 15, 27, 134–5
Produxion.com 115
programming
  in broadcasting 10
  cable-delivered 18
  commercial value 4
  commodification 68
  competition 27
  convergence culture 50–1
  crisis mentality 16
  industry reorganization 1
  minorities 6
  mobility 66–7

programming (*cont'd*)
spatial/temporal factors 3, 4
strategies 32
stunting 139
in transition 26–8
women-centered 201n30
programming channels 15
programs 6
afterlife 4, 8, 10, 28, 51, 56, 58, 99–100, 158–9
business strategies 23–4
commodification 60
economy of scarcity 17–18
innovation 6
as intellectual property 4, 23–4, 29
licensing formats 16–17, 26, 27
ownership 21, 22
television channel 4
time shifting 23
ubiquity 56
websites 14
Projansky, S. 41
promotional material 49, 70
protocol of reading 81–2
public service broadcasting
BBC 154–6, 162, 177
Doctor Who 8, 170–1, 178
transformed 15, 52, 157
pulp publications 200n10

quality programming 8, 126, 134, 196n6
Quantum Leap 81, 84
Queen 80
Queer as Folk 207n30
Quickening 41, 80, 83
quota markets 72–3

race 7, 9, 59
masculinity 10, 34–5, 39, 81
see also ethnic diversity
Ramamurthy, Sendhil 187
ratings competition 202n5
Raven 67
reality television 6–7, 14, 25–6, 131
real-time 64, 125–6, 130, 142–3
Reeve, Christopher 106, 118
Reeves, George 103, 108
regeneration
The Doctor 153, 154, 159
Doctor Who 158–60, 167, 189
regulatory liberalization 1, 12, 18–22, 25, 74, 155
Reilly, Kevin 180
Reith, John 203n3
Relic Hunter 31, 66, 67
relocation 25
remote control devices 15, 22–3
repeats 17, 76
repurposing of episodes 139, 142
Reteitalia 74
reverse compensation 192n14
(re)viewing 50, 54–5
Reynold, Richard 109
Rich, F. 131
risk management 2, 5, 191n6
Robertson, Pat 19
Robinson, S. 40–1
RoboCop 66
rock stars 71, 197n15
Rolling Stone 112
Rose, Charlie 145
Rosenbaum, Michael 112, 201n20
Rosett, C. 112
RTL-Plus 74
Rumsfeld, Donald 144
runaway productions 7, 25, 66, 192n17
Russell, G. 161, 167, 168–9, 173
Ruston, S. 130, 132, 134, 136
Rysher TPE 74, 78, 197n16

The Saint 34, 86
Sale, Tim 181, 183

same-sex pairings 42–3, 193–4n8, 193n7
Samples, Keith 78, 197n17
satellite broadcasting 23
Scalia, Antonin 144, 146
Scandinavians 77
scarcity 23, 45–6, 54
Schneider, J. 111, 113, 121, 123, 127, 188
science-fiction pulp magazines 96
SciFi 167
Scott, V. 84
Secrets of Magic Revealed 129
Seinfeld, Jerry 106
self-referentiality 27
semiotics 81–2, 89, 207–8n37
September 11 attacks 112–13, 125, 202n2
serial structure 36–7
  see also episodic seriality
7th Heaven 113, 200n8
sexuality 42, 176
Shaw, George Bernard 102
Sheena 31, 66
Shepard, Matthew 114
Sherwin, A. 177
Sherwood, R. 75
Shimpach, S. 6
Shohat, E. 33, 89
Sholem, Lee 103
Showtime 19
Shuster, Joe 96, 102, 104, 106, 118, 199n2
Siegel, Jerry 52, 96, 102, 104, 106, 118, 199n2
signification 38, 39, 40, 44, 46, 116
Simm, John 177
The Simpsons 128, 202n6
Sinbad 66, 67, 195n2
Sinclair, J. 76
Singer, Brian 108
sitcoms, single-camera 6, 14
slash fiction 42–3, 193n7
Slate 144
Smallville 7
  Advertising Age 100–1
  anticipation/deferral 116–24
  audience 100–1, 110–11
  bodily suffering 40
  brand identity 64
  debut 106, 112
  diegetic presence 51–2
  episodic seriality 118–19, 122
  gothic horror 35, 40
  iconography 117–18
  merchandising 98
  meta-textuality 199n1
  mini-episodes 99
  multinational crew/cast 25
  narrative 101–8, 120–1
  "No Flights, No Tights" mantra 109
  origins 97–8
  re-imagined 33
  repetition 122
  and Superman 11, 94–5, 110–11, 122–3, 189
  teen fantasy 8, 110
  WB Network 125
  WB-ifying Superman 108–12
  website 51
  see also Kent, Clark
smartphones 56
Smith, John 159–60, 204n11
Smith, Pete 186
Smith-Shomade, B. E. 31
Snow, Tony 144
soap operas 36
social networking sites 59
Somigli, L. 107–8
Sony TV, India 26
The Sopranos 49, 138
spatial reach 2–3, 17, 18, 20, 24, 45
  see also mobility

special effects 69, 165
spectacle 27, 34–5, 83, 146
Spigel, L. 15–16, 31
split-screen technique 45, 131, 132, 148, 202–3n8
sponsorship 180–1, 183
Spooks 132
Sprint 181, 185, 208n6
Stam, R. 33, 89
Stamp, Terence 118
Star Trek fans 42–3
Star Wars 133
state regulation 71
state security 145–6
Stein, L. 115
Steinberg, B. 183, 185
Stewart, Dave 181, 183
Stocker, Werner 79, 93
storytelling 33–4, 53–4, 99
  see also narrative
The Straight Times 187
streaming 14, 138
Strictly Come Dancing 167
stunting 125, 202n1
  casting 118
  Fox Network 128–9, 130, 191n10
  networks 127–8
  programming 139
  televisuality 130–3
  torture 146
  transmedia 138–42
subjectivity 7, 10, 42
subtexts 43
suffering 40, 114, 150
  see also torture
Sunday Herald 169
Sunday Times 206n19
Superboy 52, 106
Superdog 104
Supergirl 97, 104, 118
super-heroes 7, 51, 118
Superman
  as alien immigrant + American hero 103
  animated shorts 103, 199n4
  backstory 102, 104–5
  bodily suffering 40
  brand management 94–5, 97, 98
  character developments 103–4
  comic books 202n33
  cultural capital 110–11
  cultural history of 102
  familiarity with 95
  intellectual property 100
  merchandising 103, 106
  mythic properties 120–1
  narrative buildup 105–6
  national trauma 113
  origins 96
  ownership 199n2
  radio program 103, 106
  revisionism 106
  September 11 attacks 112–13
  signifiers 116
  as victim 114
  WB Network 94–5, 108–12, 124
  see also Kent, Clark; *Smallville*
Superman: The Animated Series 106
Superman: The Movie (Donner) 97, 104, 118, 202n33
Superman: Whatever Happened to the Man of Tomorrow? 107
Superman and the Mole-Men (Sholem) 103
Superman (Columbia Pictures) 103
Superman III 118
Superman IV: The Quest for Peace 106
Superman Returns 108
Surnow, Joel 126, 133, 140, 144
Sutherland, Donald 145
Sutherland, Keifer 41, 126, 131, 145, 147, 148–9, 150, 203n12
sword fights 69, 83
Syfy 167

syndication 17, 21, 191n6, 197–8n19
  first-run 8, 31, 75, 76
Szadkowski, J. 181

taboo subjects 77
Tandem 134
TARDIS 152, 153, 154, 162–3, 173, 205n16
Tarr, Krystmas 82
Tate, Catherine 176
Taylor, A. 41, 193n6
Taylor, P. W. 71, 72
technological changes
  BBC 155
  re-viewing 54–5
  storytelling 33–4
  television redefined 1
  viewing practices 22–4, 25, 48–9
techno-thriller 35
teen dramedies 200n8
teen fantasy 8, 110
telecasts 128
teleco 15, 191n9
Telecommunications Reform Act 21
Telefilm Canada 73, 74
Telemundo 21
television
  cultural practices 5
  economical/political role 5
  excess 78–9
  genre 82
  interpretation 5
  redefined 1–2, 15
  textual practices 5
television industry 16–18, 24
television production 24, 27
television stations 21, 129, 190n4
Television Week 179, 186
televisuality
  action genre 36
  Caldwell 5, 14, 26–8, 69, 132–3
  Highlander: The Series 69, 70, 92
  stunting 130–3
  temporal factors 2, 4, 17–18, 23, 54, 111
  see also mobility
Tennant, David 174, 175, 204n7, 205–6n18
Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles 31
terrorism 125–6, 143, 202n2
TF-1 74
TheWB.com 98
Thomas, 69
Thompson, Mark 52, 204n8
tie-ins, publishing 138
Time, Inc. 97
Time Lord 12, 45, 149, 153, 154, 175, 178
time shifting 23
time travel 45
Time-Warner 11, 22, 97
Time Warner Cable 192n13
The Times 162
Tinic, S. 71–2, 75, 77
Titus 127
TiVo 141
TLC 19
Todorov, Tzvetan 89
Torchwood 176, 206n25, 207n28
torture
  Bauer 142–3, 144, 146, 147–51, 203n9
  masculinity 147
  moral objections 144
  as narrative device 145, 146, 150–1, 203n9, 203n12
  spectacle 146
  state security 145–6
  stunting 146
  transcendence 147
  Zizek 144, 145

transcendence 64, 92, 93, 147
transgenericism 115
translatability 30, 32, 63, 82–3, 89–90
travel, space/time 45, 63–4
treaty negotiations 71, 72–3
Troughton, Patrick 153, 204n11
Tulloch, J. 89, 93, 163–4, 177, 190n1, 207–8n37
TV 360 179, 180
tweets 59
24 7, 24
  advertising/sponsorship 141
  bodily suffering 40–1
  cinematography 131–2
  critical acclaim 126, 137
  debut 200n17
  DVD boxed set 51, 140, 141
  episodic seriality 134–5
  fourth network 11–12
  Fox Network 125, 129, 130
  as loss leader stunt 136–8
  merchandising 137
  mobisodes 51
  politics and plot 143–4
  as quality television 8, 134
  reality television 131
  real-life terrorism 125–6, 143
  real-time 64, 125–6, 130, 142–3
  re-imagined 33
  repurposed 138
  split-screen technique 45, 131, 132, 148, 202–3n8
  techno-thriller 35
  videographic look 132–3, 135–6
  voice-over 138
  see also Bauer, Jack; torture
24 Conspiracy 142
Twentieth Century Fox Television 21, 133–4, 142
Twentieth-Fox Entertainment 138
twinning packages 25
Tyler, Rose 161, 170, 173–4
Uganda 52
United Paramount Network: *see* UPN
United States of America
  commercial broadcasting 16–17
  extra commercial spots 79
  Highlander: The Series 75–6
  licensing 74
  regulatory changes 18–22
  television networks/stations 129, 190n4
Universal 21
Universal Studios 187
Universal Television 158
Univision 15
UPN (United Paramount Network) 20, 21–2, 127
UPN netlet 192n1
USA (cable channel) 19
USA Network 76

Vancouver 72, 78, 79
Vandernoot, Alexander 79, 93
Vanity 71
Variety 127, 128, 137–8, 160, 182
Varley, Lynn 104–5
VCR (video cassette recorder) 23
Verizon 142
vertical integration 32
Viacom 21, 22, 187
video blogs 52
video cassette recorder (VCR) 23
video diaries 50
video game console 23
video games 49, 195n4
video on demand (VOD) 23
videographic look 132–3, 135–6
viewers
  attention 3, 5, 6, 14
  collective 157
  expanding numbers 24
  gender differences 135
  genre 81–2

identity 48, 60–1
investment 57, 58–9, 99–100
networks 18
repeat 48–9
see also audience
viewing practices
active 54
in common 57, 58, 59
cultural 54–6
pleasures 80
spatial/temporal/common 59–60
technological changes 48–9
violence 34, 40–1, 70, 144, 165
V.I.P. 31
viral advertising 182
Virgin America 185
Virgin Publishing 158, 207n35
visual pleasure 40, 41
Vivendi 187
VOD (video on demand) 23
voice over internet protocol (VoIP) 15
VoIP (voice over internet protocol) 15

Wales 206–7n27, 207n28
Wales, Josie 45
Wales on Sunday 160
Wandtke, T. 106, 107, 108
Warner Bros. Pictures 97, 99
Warner Bros. Television 22, 25, 99
Warner Bros.-Seven Arts 97
Warner Communications, Inc. 97
Washington Post 141
watching television 14
WB netlet 127, 192n1
WB Network
formation of 22, 99–100
ratings 20
reverse compensation 192n14
Smallville 11, 51, 125
Superman 94–5, 124
WB Television Network 97
Weakest Link 26
webisodes 51
websites 14, 49, 52, 59
Welling, Tom 41, 113–14, 148, 200–1n17
West Wing 49, 138
WGN 19
Wharton, D. 128
What Not to Wear 167
When Animals Attack 129
White, Perry 105–6
Who Wants to Be a Millionaire 26, 129
Who Wants to Marry a Multi-Millionaire 129
Widen, Gregory 199n32
Williams, B. 190n1
Williams, Linda 36
Williams, R. 5, 56
Wilton, Penelope 206n21
The Wire 49
wireline telephony 15
Witchblade 31
WNYW 129
WOR 19
World's Wildest Police Chases 129
Wright, B. 103
Writers Guild of America 188
WTBS 19

Xena: Warrior Princess 31, 66, 81
The X-Files 49, 127, 138, 143

Yahoo.com 181
Yoo, John 144, 203n11
YouTube 182

zapping 23
"Zeroes" 182
zipping 23
Zizek, S. 144, 145, 146–7, 203n13
Zucker, Jeff 179, 188